MICHAEL KINSLEY TELLS THE SECRETS OF MICROSOFT

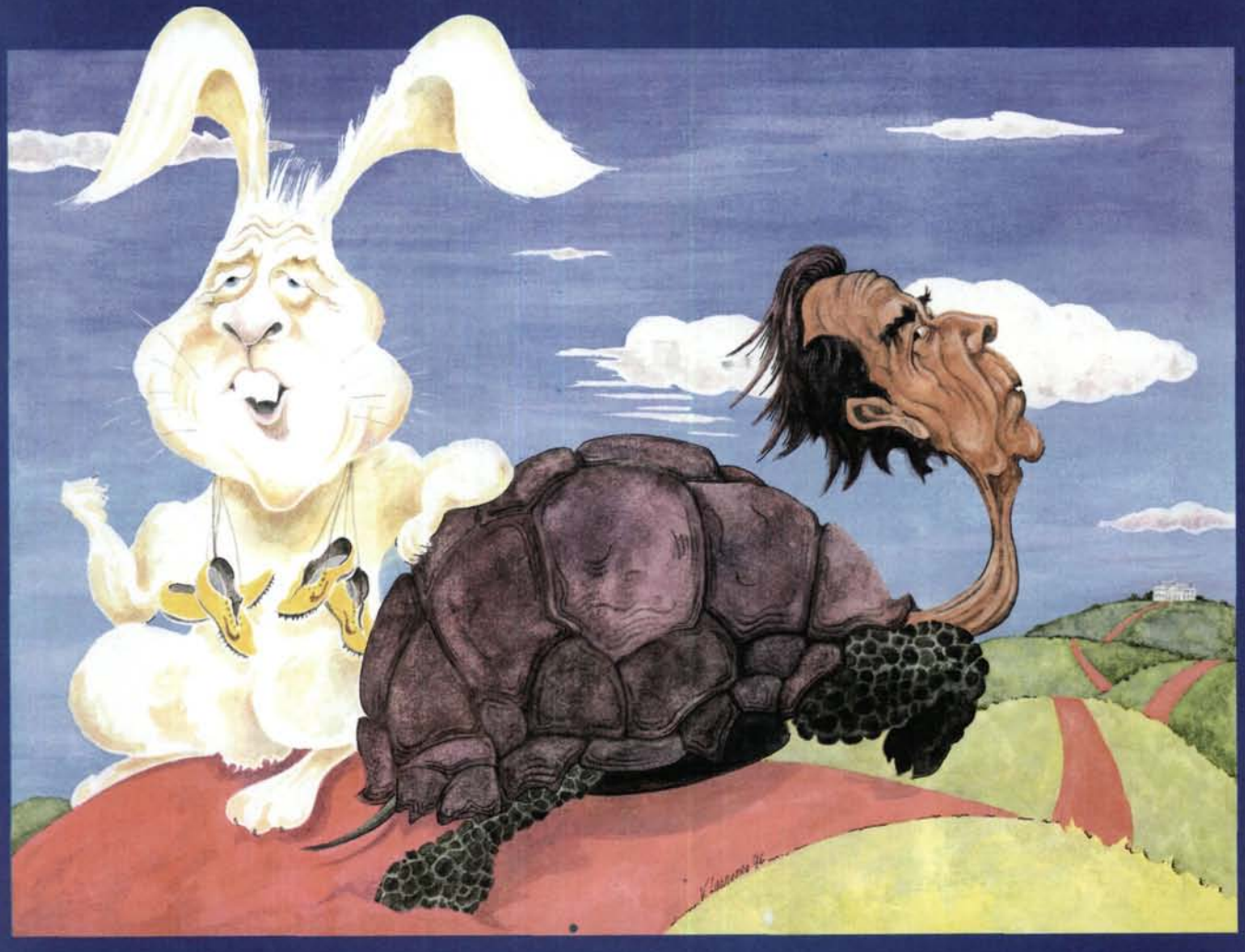
SEPTEMBER 2, 1996 • $2.95

THE NEW REPUBLIC

Jane Mendelsohn on *Trainspotting* • Jed Perl on the Triumph of African Art

HOW DOLE CAN WIN

The Comeback Strategy by Charles E. Cook Jr.
Kemp's Ambition by John B. Judis



PLUS CONVENTION COVERAGE FROM:
s, Matthew Cooper,
and Matthew Miller

#BXBKDML ******* 3-DIGIT 757
#757558A111RY007# 012797
HO NWRE S00328
AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
ROY HAMMER LIB
PO BOX 111
BIG SANDY TX 75755-0111
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

http://home.netscape.com. He's always had a lot of crazy ideas. As a Stanford professor, he mused about making 3-D graphics come alive on desktop computers. But no one listened. So he started *Silicon Graphics* and built it into a multibillion dollar legend. Then he began talking about taming cyberspace. But no one listened. So he handpicked a team of the best hacker talent in the telecosm. And soon after, *Netscape* soared to the highest IPO in market history. Now they listen. **Jim Clark bought his first copy of Forbes as a computer consultant in 1970.**

Forbes
CAPITALIST TOOL®

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Weekly Journal of Opinion

SEPTEMBER 2, 1996

FOUNDED 1914
WASHINGTON, D.C.
ISSUE 4,259

AMBASSADOR UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

PO Box 111
Big Sandy, TX 75755

Editor-in-Chief and Chairman
MARTIN PERETZ

Literary Editor
LEON WIESELTIER

Executive Editor (On Leave)
MARGARET TALBOT

Acting Editors
PETER BEINART, DAVID GREENBERG

Senior Editors
MATTHEW COOPER, ANN HULBERT, JOHN B. JUDIS, CHARLES LANE, MICHAEL LEWIS, MATTHEW MILLER, ANDREW SULLIVAN, JAMES WOOD, ROBERT WRIGHT

Legal Affairs
JEFFREY ROSEN

Films
STANLEY KAUFFMANN

Theater
ROBERT BRUSTEIN

Poetry
MARK STRAND

Dance
MINDY ALOFF

Photography
LUC SANTE

Art
JED PERL

New Republic Books (Basic Books)
PAUL GOLOB

Contributing Editors
FOUAD AJAMI, ELIOT A. COHEN, STANLEY CROUCH, JEAN BETHKE ELSHTAIN, NATHAN GLAZER, JACOB HEILBRUNN, ANNA HUSARSKA, MICKEY KAUS, MICHAEL KINSLEY, CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER, VINT LAWRENCE, GLENN LOURY, DOUGLAS G. McGRATH, LOUIS MENAND, DAVID RIEFF, ROGER ROSENBLATT, MICHAEL J. SANDEL, MAGGIE SCARF, ROBERT SHAPIRO, RONALD STEEL, E.V. THAW, TOM TOLES, TATYANA TOLSTAYA, MICHAEL WALZER, JACOB WEISBERG, SEAN WILENTZ, ALAN WOLFE, C. VANN WOODWARD

Associate Editors
HANNA ROSIN, RUTH SHALIT

Design Consultant
ERIC BAKER

Editorial-Corporate Coordinator
LAURA E. OBOLENSKY

Production Director
BRUCE STEINKE

Production Manager
HENRY RIGGS

Assistant Editors
DEBRA DUROCHER, STEPHEN GLASS

Literary Assistant
MELANIE REHAK

Reporter-Researchers
JONATHAN CHAIT, MICHAEL CROWLEY, KENNETH LEE, JASON ZINOMAN

President and Publisher
JOAN M. STAPLETON

Vice President
JAMES J. McCABE

Associate Publisher-Advertising
JENNIFER BARRETT

Controller
CHRISTINA R. BONIFER

Circulation Director
CECELIA M. STEPHENS

Marketing Manager
SHABNAM K. SHARMA

Advertising Manager
ASHLEY H. COOPER

Accounting Assistants
JACQUELYN M. McCULLOUGH, JEANNINE DINGMAN

Advertising Assistant
CLAIRE P. STERN

Circulation Assistant
CAROLYN BERRY

Back Issues and Reception
MARGO JOHNSON

Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Illustration by Vint Lawrence. Articles on pages 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14 and 20.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Exporting America, Donald Rumsfeld's résumé, &c.

6 **JOHN B. JUDIS** TRB: TRAINING KEMP The would-be veep's strange ambition.

7 **THE EDITORS** PLATFORM DIVING Bob Dole says he hasn't read the Republican Party's platform. After taking a look ourselves, we don't blame him.

8 **NOTEBOOK** *George*'s centerfolds, milk money, &c.

9 **HANNA ROSIN** SMILE, OR ELSE The GOP's chillingly smooth convention.

10 **MATTHEW MILLER** CHARADES Yes, most campaign plans are phony. But Dole's is worse.

11 **MATTHEW COOPER** QUARTERBACK SACK The White House tackles Jack Kemp.

14 **MICHAEL LEWIS** CAMPAIGN JOURNAL: IT'S A SMALL WORLD The strange world of Russell, Kansas, where Bob Dole is the economy, everyone treats one another with kindness, and people are leaving in droves.

18 **GREGORY RODRIGUEZ** THE BROWNING OF CALIFORNIA Prop 187's unexpected harvest.

20 **CHARLES E. COOK JR.** HOW BOB DOLE CAN WIN Sure, he's down in the polls and sputtering on the stump. But tax cuts, Jack Kemp and the convention—along with the right message and state-by-state strategy—could well make the Republican nominee a serious challenger this fall.

23 **MICHAEL J. SANDEL** THE HARD QUESTIONS: EASY VIRTUE Why didn't the Democrats think of this earlier?

24 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: MIDSUMMER ROUNDUP *Celestial Clockwork*, *Rendezvous in Paris*, *Flirt*, *A Time to Kill*

26 **JED PERL** ON ART: FORMAL AFRICA An embarrassment of riches at the Guggenheim.

31 **JANE MENDELSOHN** NEEDLES AND SINS *Trainspotting* by Irvine Welsh

34 **RICHARD WOLIN** LIBERALISM AS A VOCATION *Max Weber: Politics and the Spirit of Tragedy* by John Patrick Diggins

40 **MARTHA HOLLANDER** POEM *Correspondence Course*

42 **MICHAEL KINSLEY** WASHINGTON DIARIST: COMPANY MAN

THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 215, Number 10, Issue 4,259, September 2, 1996. (Printed in the U.S. on August 14, 1996.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 8 & 15, July 15 & 22, Aug. 19 & 26, and Sept. 16 & 23, 1996) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. The New Republic Advertising Sales Office (212) 702-4882. Yearly subscriptions, $69.97; foreign, $99.97; Canada, $84.97. Back issues, $3.50 (includes postage & handling). © 1996 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Microform, Canadian Periodical Index, CD-ROM, issue and article copies are available through University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Telephone 1-800-521-0600. Internet mail address: tnr@aol.com Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Subscribers: Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 602, Mount Morris, IL 61054. For subscription problems call 800-827-1289.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

Tolerance language

To the editors:

In his recent "Tolerating the Tolerant" (July 15 & 22), Michael Sandel criticizes Bob Dole's "declaration of tolerance" on abortion, saying, "If he really believes the fetus is a person, he should condemn those who would tolerate abortion. If not, he should not tolerate pro-choice Republicans, but join them."

This position is subject to two serious objections. First, Sandel fails to distinguish between beliefs and facts (sometimes defined as "true beliefs"). Assume with Sandel that Dole believes the fetus to be a person, and views abortion as the equivalent of murder. But, assume further that Dole recognizes that his belief about fetal personhood is deeply controversial. Dole believes that the fetus is a person, but without believing that his belief is an established fact. Someone holding this view can easily tolerate opposition to criminalizing abortion by those who deny the personhood of the fetus. He and they occupy the same moral ground; they merely disagree about a crucial fact.

The second difficulty with Sandel's statement is that the recognition of the personhood of the fetus is not necessarily a moral trump card. The personhood of the woman who is carrying the fetus is also morally at stake. Simple survival, the moral repugnance of giving birth to the child of a rapist, or a child who is the product of an incestuous relationship, and a host of other considerations, may make carrying the fetus to term a sharp denial of the woman's physical or psychological integrity. Bob Dole may well believe that the protection of the fetus, on balance, overwhelms these considerations. But he does no damage to his own moral position by respecting the views of those who weigh the values at stake differently.

JERRY MASHAW
New Haven, Connecticut

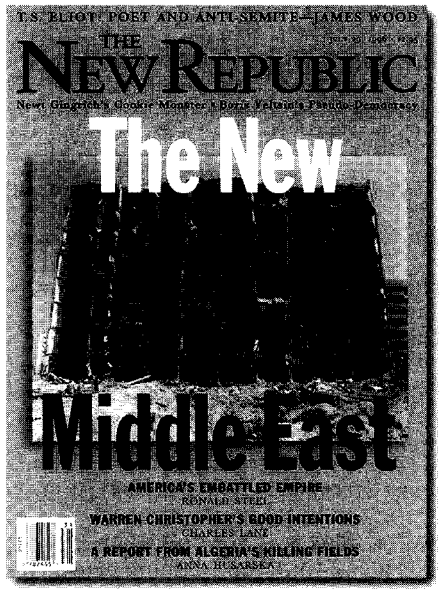
Epitaph

To the editors:

Eugene D. Genovese's fine, judicious article on Jesse Jackson ("Over the Rainbow," July 15 & 22) was marred by his careless reference to the "Old Testament's God of Wrath." Is it not time to eliminate this prejudicial phrase that distorts the Jewish concepts of both the Bible and divine wrath? There is no "Old Testament" in the Jewish spiritual concept, and "God of Justice" is more meaningful than "God of Wrath," because "God of Wrath" evokes for the modern person "the embarrassment of anger" as Abraham Heschel states in his book on the Prophets (vol. 11).

Wrath today is regarded as an arbitrary emotion, callous, inflictive and usually unjust. Divine wrath, as biblical man understood it, was hardly that, but an appropriate response to evil. Perhaps one of our problems is that divine wrath has been reduced to an epitaph.

ROBERTA KALECHOFSKY
Marblehead, Massachusetts



No thank you

To the editors:

Most thinking people in Washington know that being zapped by TNR is both part of being in Washington and a badge of merit, even honor. For a magazine that pretends to inform and analyze, though, TNR sometimes gets terribly confused. And very wrong.

Don Rumsfeld ("The New Boss," July 15 & 22), who does in fact write "thank-you notes," is considered by Michael Crowley, whose own curriculum vitae is not readily available and in any case would hardly be a match for Rumsfeld's, to be a "1970s-era bureaucratic operator" with years in Washington "in service to no particular ideology." Among Rumsfeld's other deficiencies, Crowley says in this snide and vitriolic broadside, he's a "process Republican" who lacks "ideological firmness" on the one hand, but on the other hand "approaches hawk purity" and "is likely to encourage the Dole campaign's growing focus on defense." This from a man with "no vision"?

Crowley's as wrong as an uninformed journalist can be. From his first moments in Congress in early 1963, Rumsfeld was active in the realm of ideas and spoke eloquently and often on major public policy issues. A Princeton graduate and a naval aviator, Rumsfeld served as Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity, Director of the Economic Stabilization Program, Ambassador to NATO, White House Chief of Staff, Secretary of Defense and helped elect Ronald Reagan. This is the record of a Beltway lightweight? More likely the reflection of a distinguished public career of more than three decades!

On leaving the government in 1976, Rumsfeld remained involved in public affairs (domestic and foreign), was called upon by President Reagan as a special envoy to the Middle East, ran several businesses very well, was on the board of the RAND Corporation, and retained strong and active ties to a number of Washington and other think tanks.

Crowley faults Rumsfeld for deciding against a run for the presidency in 1988, but neglects to mention the odds against defeating a sitting vice president endorsed by Ronald Reagan at the peak of his own popularity. Most mainstream conservatives thought well of Rumsfeld then, and are reassured by his new role as policy coordinator for the Dole campaign. All in all, Michael Crowley took a cheap shot at Don Rumsfeld, and looks the worse for having done it. I'll bet he doesn't have either the guts or the agility to present personally a copy of his article to Rumsfeld, who might even extend the courtesy of a thank-you note.

RICHARD V. ALLEN
Washington, D.C.

Borderline

To the editors:

Although his review of Leo Katz's *Ill-Gotten Gains* ("The Immoralist," July 15 & 22) is interesting and informative, Richard A. Posner makes a flawed claim. To illustrate his point that "dichotomizing continuous phenomena" produces "difficult borderline cases," Posner asserts that "If you cut a line, the cut will separate two indistinguishable points." This analogy is perfectly appropriate and rhetorically effective, but, as he expresses it, it's also just plain wrong.

I assume that Posner does not refer to any tangible material line, since that would be made up of discrete particles of matter which are thus entirely distinguishable. So he must have in mind instead the mathematical notion of a line.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Imagine the real number line (what our ninth-grade teacher might have called the x-axis) having suffered the removal of the point corresponding to the value 1. On this punctured line there is a pair of points that is as close as you please to one another while irretrievably separated by the hole at 1. Still, we have no trouble distinguishing the two points: one of them we call less than 1 and the other greater. Though the points may be arbitrarily close, they are distinct, and thus distinguishable.

PAUL J. TANENBAUM
Bel Air, Maryland

Invitation only

To the editors:

Ronald Steele's article "Blowback" (July 29) seems to suggest that the hostility the United States inspires in many quarters abroad is a result of its desire to dominate, in various ways, the world. In doing so he overlooks a crucial aspect of the conflict between the United States and traditional societies. Although it is true that American culture and its products subvert traditional cultures, this takes place, so to speak, at the invitation of the people of those societies; the process is by no means one of unilateral imposition.

The fact of the matter is that American cultural products, consumer goods and certain values which go with them are eagerly embraced and sought after all over the world. People abroad (as well as at home) genuinely like many of the things—products, fashions, trashy TV programs, etc.—some of us may hold in contempt; perhaps they suffer of false consciousness. Guardians of traditional values and customs abroad do not speak for the majority in the abhorrence of American cultural influences and the country from which they emanate. Anti-Americanism is, by and large, an elite phenomenon, at home as well as abroad.

PAUL HOLLANDER
Amherst, Massachusetts

Age-old

To the editors:

Regarding John B. Judis's article "Loathing in Las Vegas" in your July 15 & 22 issue, when Judis meets Scott Nelson at Binion's Horseshoe he is 57, i.e. born in 1939. Yet Nelson "at 29, in 1972, first joined a klavern in Houston," i.e. born in 1943. Is Nelson 53 or 57? Or is there something about Las Vegas that ages people prematurely?

JOHN CUSHING
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Read ROSS MILLER's story of The Buying and Selling of a Great American City

"Must reading for anyone who cares about America's cities and what keeps them alive... What makes *Here's the Deal* so instructive are not just the details of back-room wheeling and dealing that relate specifically to Chicago. It's the extent to which Mr. Miller shows how the best-laid plans can go awry in any city—and what gets lost when they do." —EDWARD GUNTS, Baltimore Sun

The New Yorker applauds "Miller's irreverent and entertaining real-estate saga."

"An engrossing account [that] details how five mayors, a number of public-private insiders, a few prima donna architects and a bunch of gamblers in the guise of developers managed to turn a once bustling commercial strip in the heart of Chicago's Loop into a gaping hole."
—DON MCLEESE, Austin American-Statesman

"Smart, wise, funny, knowing. Miller has found practically everything there is to say about American cities over the last generation...A representative urban tragedy... A high-spirited recounting." —NICHOLAS LEMANN

Just published by Knopf http://www.randomhouse.com

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TRB®
FROM WASHINGTON

Training Kemp

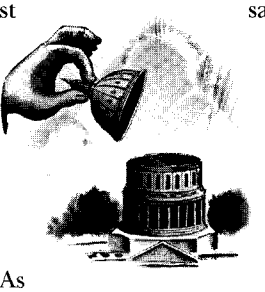
By choosing Jack Kemp as his running mate, Bob Dole significantly improved his own chances of becoming president. But he also elevated Kemp, who was headed for obscurity after one failed run for the presidency in 1988. Like a big-name Hollywood star who ends his days playing second-rate hotels in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, Kemp, once thought to be Ronald Reagan's successor, had become a regular on the corporate after-dinner circuit. How the former Buffalo congressman allowed this to happen reveals something about the peculiar kind of politician that he is.

Kemp has never had the same searing ambition to be president that moved Bill Clinton, Bob Dole and other politicians who have sought the office. Time and again he proved unwilling to do the things every aspiring candidate must do to win. During the '70s and '80s, when he served in the House, well-meaning advisers told him repeatedly he needed to raise his national visibility and augment his fund-raising base to run successfully for president. But Kemp always balked at risking defeat and feared the loss of his congressional seat if he pursued statewide office.

In 1980, Kemp was widely urged to challenge incumbent Republican Senator Jacob Javits for the party nomination. When Kemp demurred, Al D'Amato, an obscure Long Island county official, entered the race, beat Javits in the primary and went on to become senator. In 1982, Kemp backed away from taking on New York Governor Mario Cuomo.

In the early '90s, when he served unhappily as the Bush administration's Housing secretary and resident black sheep, Kemp refused to listen to friends who urged him to resign and run for Senate in California in 1992. Instead, after Bush was defeated that year, Kemp founded Empower America, an organization that many viewed as a vehicle for a 1996 presidential bid. But he kept delaying a decision to run until it was too late. Wealthy contributors who thought they were funding Kemp by supporting Empower America felt cheated. Young conservatives who had seen Kemp as the leader of their generation were furious. One who went to work at Empower America told me last month, "Kemp bitterly disappointed me. He let me down. He didn't have the focus."

Kemp does not lack competitiveness. Friends testify that he hates to lose at anything, from politics to tennis. But running for president, and doing so repeatedly until you either win or are ground down, requires something beyond a desire to compete. Kemp never quite had that. Once, sitting in his office at HUD waiting to interview him, I arrived at my own explanation. The office was filled with photos from his political career, but the largest picture, commanding an entire wall, showed him as a professional quarterback fading back to pass.



Most politicians who seek the presidency doggedly and indefatigably grew up harboring that single ambition. It was the end point of their life's struggle. As a child, Kemp had an overriding ambition, but it was not to be president of the United States. He wanted to be a professional football quarterback. His brother Tom Kemp, now a businessman in Los Angeles, confirmed this. "Most of our talk in those real early years was sports," he said. If Jack Kemp had a dream, "it was to be a pro quarterback. That was the focal point of his ambition."

Kemp's dream of becoming a pro quarterback was almost as farfetched as Bill Clinton's or Richard Nixon's dream of becoming president, but he persisted. He was a star quarterback in high school in Los Angeles, but he went to college at Occidental, a small school known for its academics. He was a successful quarterback, but pro scouts judged him to be too small. At barely six feet, he would not be able to see over the heads of onrushing linemen. When he graduated in 1957, he was drafted in the seventeenth round by the Detroit Lions and cut before the season began. He was signed by the New York Giants but was again dropped from the team before playing in a single game. He drove to Canada to try out for the Calgary Stampeders of the Canadian Football League but was let go again. He spent three years writing coaches and wandering from team to team.

His friends and family counseled him to give up, but then, in 1960, one of the new American Football League teams, the Los Angeles (later the San Diego) Chargers, gave him a shot. The fledgling league afforded Kemp a chance to star, and what he lacked in size he made up for in determination and savvy. He and the league succeeded; he became its most valuable player in 1965 and the leader of a championship Buffalo Bills team. Sportswriters eventually elected him to the Pro Football Hall of Fame, the sport's highest honor.

As I sensed that day in his office, Kemp's success at football exhausted that special reserve of ambition that people stow away for their highest goals. He realized the image of himself he had carried since his childhood. What came afterward could never have been as all-consuming. He had become interested in politics and economics in college—as a pro player, he used to read von Hayek on the bus and on planes while his teammates played cards—but he never saw his career in sports as a springboard to politics the way many politicians view their earlier business careers. Instead, becoming a politician was a second career for him, just as it has been for former pitcher Jim Bunning and former wide receiver Steve Largent, both currently serving in the House, and for other sports standouts. (Ex-basketballer Bill Bradley, who harbored dreams of politics and sports, is a harder case.) Kemp pursued politics energetically, but not with the manic zeal with which he pursued pro football. He wasn't willing to risk the humiliation of defeat for that single victory.

That lack of zeal meant that Kemp would never become president simply on his own effort. He was unwilling to fight his way out of the pack in 1996 and to risk being branded a has-been and a failure. But the qualities that make a successful presidential campaigner aren't a prerequisite to being a good president. Dwight Eisenhower fulfilled his own dream on the beaches of Normandy. He was pressured to run for president in 1948, but resisted and had to be drafted into office in 1952. Once in office, Eisenhower made a decent president. On the other hand, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and other men who burned and fought for the job probably suffered in office from their excessive determination to make a mark.

Bob Dole has now done for Kemp what Kemp couldn't do for himself. He has boosted him back into national leadership and put him within reach of becoming president. Even if Dole loses, Kemp will be well positioned for 2000. And if Dole wins, Kemp will become his heir apparent and will be in a position to assume an office that he was never quite willing to fight for.

JOHN B. JUDIS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE NEW REPUBLIC

SEPTEMBER 2, 1996

PLATFORM DIVING

Is the Republican platform worth reading? Not to Bob Dole, who still hasn't found the time, nor to the GOP's oh-so-moderate convention speakers, who appear chosen largely because they disagree with its plank on abortion (criminalize it, even when the mother's life is at stake). But although the platform is, predictably, a farrago of inoffensive pabulum ("We are the party of the American family, educating children, caring for the sick...") and unintended hilarity ("Prisons should not be places of rest and relaxation"), it still provides a useful glimpse into the contradictions of what remains the closest thing America has to a majority party.

Take, for example, the planks on terrorism, which both excoriate President Clinton for coddling terrorists and pander to the GOP's Ruby Ridge wing: "To take away the liberty of the American people while fighting terrorism is repugnant to the history and character of our nation." How will the anti-big government Republicans fight terrorism while opposing things like taggants to trace bomb-powder? Establish a "blue ribbon" commission. Nothing scares killers like a panel of experts.

Elsewhere, the platform gets similarly caught between its enthusiasm for states' rights and its insistence that they do the right-wing thing. The GOP would "require the original sponsor of [any] proposed federal legislation to cite specific constitutional authority for the measure." Yet the platform cites no such authority for its own calls to nationalize product-liability law and to force legal reforms upon the states: "restore limited liability" to churches "to provide protection against profit-seeking lawsuits," "eliminate the use of junk science" by "opportunistic attorneys" and so on.

Along with scrapping the Education Department, the platform says plainly, "the federal government has no constitutional authority to be involved in the school curricula." But a few lines later comes a truly bizarre call for Napoleonic micromanagement: an exhortation to "requir[e] our public schools to dedicate one full day each year to studying the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution."

Why not a week? For when the Republicans get through with the Constitution, there'll be a lot more of it to study. A cursory count yields calls for six new amendments: to extend Fourteenth Amendment citizenship protections to the unborn; to deny them to the children of illegal immigrants born in the U.S.; to protect "victims' rights"; and, of course, to outlaw the various forms of mutilation and political adornment that might fall under the category of "desecration" of the American flag. Banning abortion and flag-burning are hardy perennials, and victims' rights, too, is becoming a familiar pander. The denial of birthright citizenship, however—a radical shift in our notion of Americanhood—demands vociferous rebuttal from all responsible quarters.

In its economic planks, the platform states, "Research and development is our commitment to the future." It then endorses "de-emphasizing the role of government"—that is, cutting spending—on R&D, which is what the GOP Congress proposed. The next paragraph praises a Dole-sponsored law that expanded federally funded research. The GOP sounds similarly confused on homeownership, which, it declares, "is not something government gives to the people, but rather something they can attain for themselves...." Two sentences later, it reiterates support for the mortgage interest tax deduction, a subsidy the government provides to boost homeownership.

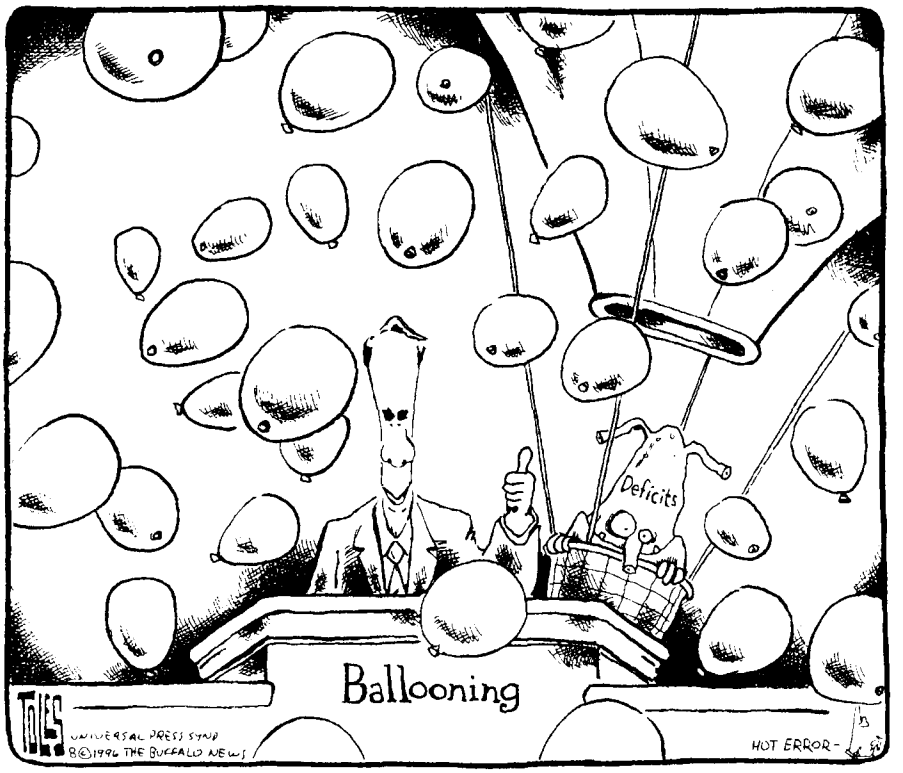
On foreign policy, the platform betrays open warfare between the party's neocons and its America-firsters. "We vigorously support restoring the promotion of democracy worldwide," the preamble announces. How? Not by using economic aid to reward poor countries for breaking with authoritarianism. That, the platform says, is "social welfare spending in the Third World." The multinational disarmament and election-monitoring efforts that have given birth to democracy in Mozambique, Cambodia and El Salvador meet with reproof, too. "Bill Clinton's peacekeeping operations and other global ventures" haven't had "any discernible benefit to U.S. national security." Of course not. Promoting democracy in impoverished corners of the globe isn't an expression of American interests in any direct way, it's an expression of American beliefs. But the Buchanan wing of the party doesn't think that America should have moral concerns beyond its borders. So the platform's specific foreign policy planks render its preamble meaningless.

Bob Dole has, understandably, tried to bury this mishmash of confusion and dishonesty in the scripted moderation of San Diego. Still, if this is the best statement his party can offer about what it would do in office, what does it say about the policies he would pursue as president? •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTEBOOK

CURDLED: Last week, the Clinton administration approved a dairy cartel that will hike milk prices in New England as much as 25 percent, an increase that will fall most heavily on the poor. Earlier this year, Republicans undid Depression-era dairy regulations, denying Vermont farmers the artificially raised prices they had long enjoyed. In response, Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy attached the "Northeast Compact" to the GOP bill. The Compact not only keeps fixed prices for milk in New England, it lets farmers set them. Though experts warned it would put low-income children at nutritional risk, the Senate and House passed the sweeping reforms, assuming Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman would reject the Compact amendment. After all, to reject the milk monopoly Glickman had to find it offered no "compelling public interest." But he, and Bill Clinton, approved it anyway, putting the interests of 3,600 dairy farmers above the 13 million New Englanders who will get milked for an additional $110 million a year at the check-out line.



BOYGEORGE: The new issue of *George*—anorexically thin, by the standards of glossies in September—features "The Twenty Most Fascinating Women in Politics." Hillary Clinton, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Bay Buchanan, Arianna Huffington: the usual suspects, plus such seasoned pols as Terry McMillan and Carolyn Chute. The really unexpected "women in politics" appear in the magazine's centerfold and on its cover. Appearing as "Miss September" in the "*George* centerfold" (don't worry, it's just a way of getting people to read the articles) is Brigitte Bardot, celebrating herself for her consecration to the cause of animal rights. Are any of the editors at this journal of politics aware that Miss September is one of the most famous fascists in France? She calls herself a friend of Jean-Marie Le Pen, and she is married to a leader of his National Front Party, and just a few months ago she wrote this in *Le Figaro*: "My country, France, my fatherland, is once again invaded, with the blessing of successive governments, [this time] by an overpopulation of foreigners, particularly Muslims, to whom we owe allegiance. From one year to the next we are seeing the construction of mosques all over France while our village church bells grow silent for lack of priests," and so on. And then there is the magazine's cover. To celebrate Bill Clinton's 50th birthday, Drew Barrymore was asked by John F. Kennedy Jr. to dress up as Marilyn Monroe and do the look of the poor actress and sex object as she sang "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" to John F. Kennedy Jr.'s father at Madison Square Garden in 1962, though at the time John F. Kennedy Jr.'s father and John F. Kennedy Jr.'s uncle were having problems about ... well, we are not struck by the cover's taste. The boys of *George* should stick to commentary on the chicks of their own time. They screw up on retro-babes.

OVERHEARD AT THE CONVENTION: "Let me just start by saying somebody I wanted to introduce to all of you, a good friend of mine and a good friend of Bob Dole's—somebody who many of you will recognize—Kent Steffes, who won the first gold medal ever given in the Olympics for beach volleyball, from California, is right here with us. You know, Kent is an example of what freedom is all about. A mere forty years ago, beach volleyball was just beginning. Now, it is not only a sport in the Olympics, there are over thirty countries that have a competition internationally. There are some thirteen states with twenty-five cities in America, and there's a whole new world of opportunity opening up that didn't even exist thirty years ago or forty years ago. And no bureaucrat would have invented it, and that's what freedom is all about."
—Newt Gingrich

"My choice [to head the platform committee] was clearly Kay James, and for many reasons. She is African American, she is a woman, she is highly intelligent. I could put together ten reasons."—Henry Hyde •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Enforcing tolerance in San Diego.

SMILE, OR ELSE

By Hanna Rosin

On Coronado Island, near San Diego, the Florida delegation to the Republican convention is hosting its first breakfast. Two delegates, Norma Thomson and Pamela Bunsen, wear the omnipresent hats: white straw, with "The *Life* of the Party" in red letters on the brim—a poor, off-kilter joke. I ask them how they feel about pro-choice delegates. They look at each other, then at me, and chime, in perfect unison, "Florida united in victory for Dole/Kemp," as if I were a TV camera. I ask state delegation chair Tom Slade how he unifies his cattle ranchers, Cubans and Palm Beach snobs. He replies tautologically: "We live in total harmony." A forced smile stretches across his face.

The Florida delegation is not just an island of harmony. It is a microcosm of the whole convention, a model state for the Bob Dole nation. Determined not to repeat the 1992 Houston debacle, the Dole campaign went to great lengths to preach tolerance. To enforce this civility, convention managers have borrowed a page from John Gotti. Tolerate, or be swiftly punished.

For starters, campaign memos offer helpful fashion tips: "Pale blue, grey and tan do not show well," and ladies should never wear jingly bracelets or forget their lipstick. In the Kansas delegation, not a hair is out of place—crisp white shirts, red and blue accessories. The delegates, placed front and center for the TV cameras, were telephoned several times a day with reminders to act happy. "Heads up, keep smiling, keep everybody in their seats, no frowning, that kind of thing," explains delegate Karen Casto, as she reaches out to straighten my collar.

Speakers are kept on a tight leash. It's no coincidence that every speech ends up a dull echo of the one before, every wife the "first lady of my life," all children "beautiful," every family replete with a grandfather who "climbed up from nowhere" or who was downsized and didn't complain. Almost every single convention speaker underwent a vetting interview. Survivors were assigned a topic to speak on, such as taxes, or the future of the party. Off limits were abortion and the call to deny birthright citizenship to the children of illegal aliens. Those who accepted were given a staffer to "help" with the draft. "There is no freelancing involved," Republican Party Chairman Haley Barbour snapped in a moment of surly frankness. "We're not going to let people talk about whatever it is they feel like talking about."

The pro-choicers suffered the most. Maryland Representative Connie Morella made the best of it. "The platform recognizes there is diversity," she said, and listed the names of pro-choice congresswomen speaking: Susan Molinari, Jennifer Dunn, Deborah Pryce, Sue Kelly. But the women were permitted to speak only because they all agreed in advance not to mention the a-word.

The men—Governors William Weld and Pete Wilson—both on the late-July list of speakers, wouldn't relent. When Weld, who hadn't yet received a formal invitation to speak, called convention organizers, they asked what he wanted to talk about. He proposed a variation of his 1992 speech, where he was booed for mentioning his pro-choice views. They called back and asked him to speak on taxes. He declined. Then, a week before the convention, they offered him a spot introducing two videos—one on Morry Taylor, the other on an average American couple talking about their taxes. Again, he said no.

Wilson was dealt a more humiliating fate. Two weeks before the convention, having already received an invitation and a fashion memo, he began a pro-choice campaign. He wrote a *New York Times* op-ed pressuring Dole on the platform. He lobbied delegates to start a floor fight. When the platform committee removed diversity language from the plank, he called Dole immediately. He got no answer. He decided to hold a press conference in San Diego. About an hour later, Dole called. Wilson listened for fifteen minutes, and they came up with a compromise. Pro-choice views would be amended as a minority opinion, as in a Supreme Court case, at the end of the document. They negotiated down to the size of the type (the dissents would be bound with the platform and printed in the same font). Still, Dole held a grudge, and Wilson was never offered a real speaking slot. Dole offered to let the governor stand behind the mayor of San Diego during her speech. Wilson passed.

As recriminations set in among the pro-choice camp—"For Weld, this is a pumped-up ruse because he's running for Senate," says an ally—the pro-lifers held a "Whale of a Party," at Sea World. In a sunny, open-air tent with red, white and blue flaps, Pat Buchanan declared victory before a roaring crowd: "The platform reflects the views of the right to life all the way!" Eagle Forum founder Phyllis Schlafly, radiant in a Matisse-print outfit, presented veteran pro-lifers with crystal whales, then sashayed with California Representative Bob Dornan to "Missouri Wolf." The shadows of passing eagles glided across the tent like a blessing of the holy spirit.

It's hard to think of Bob Dole as a puppeteer, engineering all the details. His speeches teem with self-doubt. "I guess, as Winston Churchill said, never give up, never give up, never give up," he said, about as flatly as roadkill on the Kansas plain. That day he was speaking to a group of dog trainers called Canine Companions for Independence. Dog trainers? One of them explained, "We give them obedience classes so the dogs are manageable in all situations." Dole smirked. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dole's phony economics.

CHARADES

By Matthew Miller

"Everybody in this room's gonna get tax relief!"
—Bob Dole, August 5, 1996

When respected politicians offer silly plans claiming to fix big national problems, journalists are nonetheless expected to give them the rational analysis only serious plans deserve. The very effort legitimizes such proposals as constructive additions to public debate. Especially when these schemes are offered by a major party's presidential candidate, there's no way around the conundrum, except to note it. Which brings us to Bob Dole's new economic "plan."

Everyone knows that Dole's call to cut taxes $550 billion over six years while also balancing the budget betrays his lifelong claims to be a fiscal conservative in favor of the "supply-side" voodoo he's loathed. But you need to look at the plan's "details" to really appreciate how it brings budget chicanery to dizzying new heights. Indeed, if Dole's team of job-seeking economists and GOP has-beens had set out to discredit his career-long reputation for fiscal courage, they couldn't have done it any better.

Begin, as Dole does, with the candy. Dole's basic assortment (using his campaign's six-year cost estimates) includes a phased-in 15 percent cut in income tax rates ($400 billion); a $500 per-child tax credit ($75 billion); a repeal of Clinton's 1993 increase in the portion of wealthier Social Security recipients' benefits that are subject to taxes ($27 billion); a cut in the top capital gains tax from 28 to 14 percent ($13 billion); and a potpourri of such savings incentives as IRA expansions and tax-favored education accounts ($27 billion).

To put Dole's new recklessness in perspective, these tax cuts amount to more than twice what Republicans considered "revolutionary" in the budget the president vetoed last fall, and *nearly five times* what the GOP specified in its updated budget blueprint this spring. As Martha Phillips of the Concord Coalition notes, Dole's projected revenue loss for 2002 alone is what this year's Congress hoped to enact for the next six years together.

Unfortunately, cost aside, the economics of the plan are no better. Capital gains devotees say lower rates are needed to spur savings and investment. Yet last time we ran that experiment and lowered top rates from 35 percent to 20 percent between 1978 and 1985, savings and investment *fell*. According to most economists, Dole-style IRA expansions give people tax breaks for saving they're already doing, meaning that our dismal overall savings rate would be unaffected. Demagoguing Clinton's modest Social Security tax hike, which affected only the best-off 13 percent of beneficiaries, poisons the well for the kind of sensible means-testing that Dole knows will soon have to be considered. And even the growth crowd admits Dole's child tax credit will boost only current consumption—unless parents sock it away in Dole's new education account, converting it, in effect, to a huge, government-funded savings plan of the kind liberals would blush to propose.

Of course, the income tax cut is the plan's "crown jewel" when it comes to supposed incentives for work and growth. Assessing its likely impact means entering into the religious war over the economic lessons of the 1980s. The mainstream view is that, yes, Reagan's lower marginal rates spurred some undetermined growth (though for most workers, subsequent payroll tax hikes offset any income tax cuts). But the "boom" supply-siders love to tout, the 3.8 percent annual growth between 1982 and 1989, came mainly because we were emerging from a deep recession that left jobless rates in double digits and much idle capacity. When easier Fed policy and the *demand-side* boost from Reagan's unprecedented deficits picked up this "slack," we grew faster for a time. Measured properly, however—from peak to peak in the business cycle—the 1970s actually saw faster growth (3.4 percent) than the 1980s (2.7 percent).

The supply-side elixir is an illusion, something Dole's plan unintentionally admits itself. As Robert Reischauer of the Brookings Institution points out, Dole's plan implicitly assumes we'll get to about 2.5 percent growth from 2.2ish today. That's a far cry from the 3.5 percent Dole and new soulmate Jack Kemp peddle on the stump.

When it comes to paying for this bonanza, Dole offers a hoax wrapped in a farce tucked inside a charade. He conveniently extrapolates a mysterious current revenue blip to bank $80 billion more than the Congressional Budget Office now expects will come in. He says a third of his supply-side tax cuts will pay for themselves via higher growth, nearly twice the "magic" Ronald Reagan himself relied on in the '80s. Dole also books, in advance, the so-called "fiscal dividend" that a credible balanced budget plan might bring (through lower interest rates and higher growth), even though his plan is anything but credible.

Then, if possible, it gets worse. Dole assumes enactment of $393 billion in spending cuts from the GOP budget that Clinton vetoed last year. But tons of these cuts were legislated by a mere spending "cap," and thus never specified at all. Even with this gimmick, Dole still falls $217 billion short of balance. That's trouble, since Dole has irresponsibly sworn to keep the most expensive programs—defense and Social Security—off the table, along with any Medicare and Medicaid savings beyond what Republicans have offered already. That

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leaves basically one area to slice: so-called "domestic discretionary" spending, which makes up just 15 percent of the budget, and which has already shrunk from 5 percent of national income twenty years ago toward 3 percent today. This category includes everything we normally think of as government, from national parks to NASA to the FBI.

Follow the bouncing ball here. Last year, with its painless "cap," the GOP pledged to cut such discretionary spending 25 percent in real terms by 2002. Now, Dole sees that cut and raises it to 40 percent. If you assume Dole would spare R&D, crime-fighting, veterans and education money, he'd have to cut the rest—things such as airline safety, environmental protection and low-income housing—an astonishing 60 percent. This, when Republicans already say privately that last year's proposed 25 percent cut is both politically impossible and bad policy.

The bottom line? It's a fraud, covered up through deception and double counting. Dole says he'd seek deep cuts in the Energy and Commerce Departments, but those cuts (if achievable) would already have been used by the GOP to meet the zillions in unspecified prior savings Dole wants to count in his own plan. His additional "10 percent cut in nondefense administrative costs" preposterously assumes that $150 billion of today's $265 billion in domestic spending is "administrative" (by Dole's reckoning, FBI and DEA agents fit this category).

How does the campaign defend this? As all pols know, the trick on television is to have two "talking points" that sound "credible," because after two nonanswers, interviewers move on. So we see Donald Rumsfeld earnestly explaining that with a line-item veto, Dole can do it—though the "pork" such a veto could excise amounts, under the most porcine estimates, to 1 percent of federal spending. Jack Kemp sidesteps questions about whether Social Security or Medicare will be touched with the usual blather on growth. Since network interviewers—thanks to ignorance, time limits, fear of offending "star" guests or eventual frustration—usually tolerate such official dishonesty, the scam invariably works. So the question of whether Dole's plan is serious becomes, in the public mind, a legitimate matter for debate, rather than being branded—as Newt Gingrich rightly implores the media to dub Clinton's rhetoric about Medicare "cuts"—a con.

Dole allies, putting the best spin on their man's move, say that he's still a budget-balancer and that his embrace of whopping tax cuts is in the noble tradition of "Nixon going to China." They have it exactly wrong. Nixon's alchemy turned a lifetime of dishonorable red-baiting into a historic overture for peace. By contrast, Dole now squanders a lifetime of honorable resistance to candy-cane politics in a blatant pander that will only hamstring responsible governance even if it works and he wins. If he needed to energize Republicans, Dole could have proposed a reckless plan like this, or named Jack Kemp as veep. Surely he didn't have to do both. •

The rush against Kemp.

QUARTERBACK SACK

By Matthew Cooper

SAN DIEGO

Standing next to Ralph Reed on the Republican convention floor is like standing next to the young Paul McCartney at Heathrow Airport. He's bigger than God, a sex symbol in Brooks Brothers. When Reed is spotted near the Wisconsin delegation, the photographers and the admirers race over. It's a rugby scrum. Elbows shove. Arms reach. "We are with you, my friend," says a man in a Helen Chenoweth t-shirt, denoting his support for the gun-promoting, militia-condoning Idaho congresswoman. This adulation would delight any political boss.

Reed, though, has special reason to grin. He's gotten his Christmas-in-August: a right-to-life platform, a right-to-life nominee and now a right-to-life veep. How does Reed think the party should treat its newest resource? "They should not do [with Jack Kemp] what they did with Dan Quayle—send him to small media markets and safe areas. They should send him right out to battleground states, the inner city, everywhere."

Everywhere. This is a heady, expansive time for Republicans. The Dole resurrection has made Republicans crazy for Kemp. Right-wingers such as Gary Bauer say that "Kemp should not just be the ambassador to the right-to-life movement or minorities. He should go out to the entire country." Moderates such as Connecticut Congressman Christopher Shays want Kemp in their own states. "I want to win Bridgeport," Shays says of his state's grittiest city.

The Kemp-spawned enthusiasm of the Republicans is, at times, laughable, comic. After all, this is still a party divided. Their hypocrisies are absurd. The party that opposes affirmative action has a veritable quota system for its platform speakers: the Indian medicine man reads the Pledge of Allegiance, the Greek Orthodox minister offers the benediction, the Hispanic Christian rocker croons "The Star-Spangled Banner." Bob Dole's life was saved by one of the enemies of this convention, "government-run" health care. The party has not dissolved its differences. The Planet Hollywood Rock-the-Vote party, where sweaty, preppy blond Republicans gyrate to funk, is a world away from the right-to-life party at Sea World, where Phyllis Schlafly presided and the crowd began its session with the movement's hymn:

> God hears each infant voice,
> Let Him guide each mother's choice.

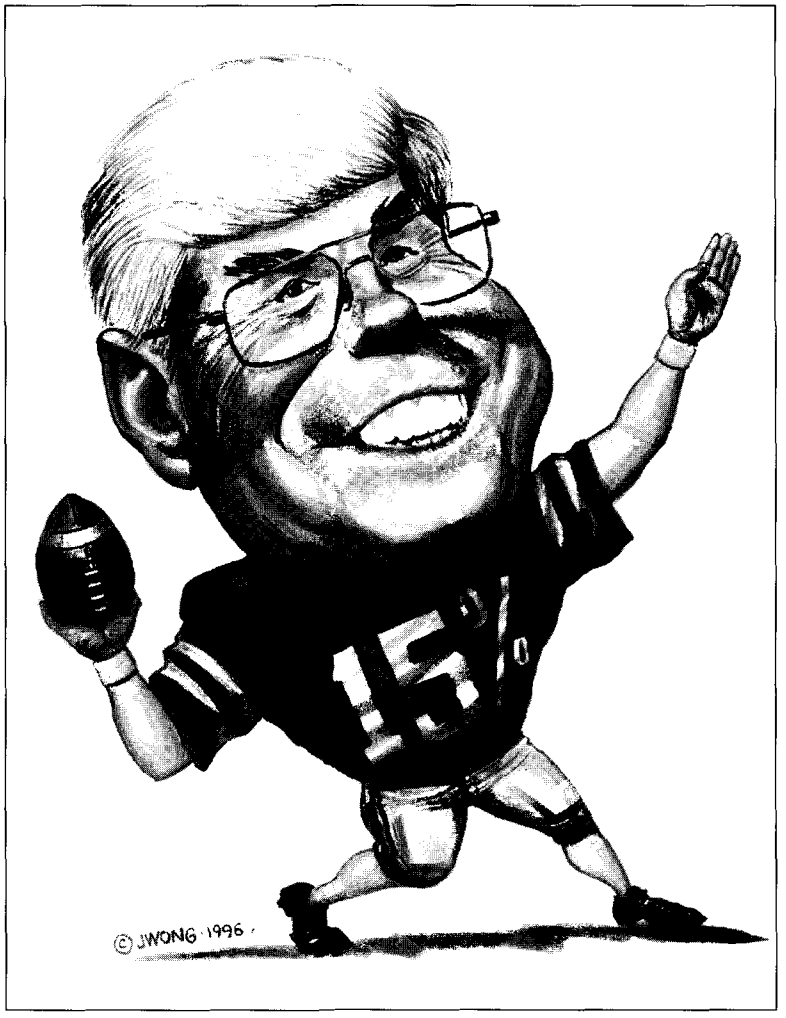
The Kemp selection hasn't erased these differences.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But it's built a scaffolding over them. The one thing these delegates agree about may soon become the main topic of the election: taxes. Sure, Dole's born-again supply-side is craven—an embarrassing, Bush-like lurch to the right. So is Kemp's sudden opposition to affirmative action. But the tax issue is now where the Republicans want it: on the podium, in prime time, where it can change the election.

The White House knows this, even if the latest news has been encouraging. In recent days, the private, internal polling of Mark Penn has shown Dole's support growing slowly, with the president's "top line" support hovering comfortably above 50 percent. Penn's country-is-on-the-right-track/wrong-track numbers look especially good. Still, the White House knows that taxes are a huge weakness.

The Clinton campaign now needs a plan to deal with both Kemp and the new supply-side religion. At first, it stumbled. Ann Lewis's chirp that Kemp was an "extremist" backfired. So did the White House's Tsongas-like tsk-tsking that the Dole-Kemp plan would expose the deficit; leave that to Dick Lamm, advisers quickly concluded. What will get traction, White House advisers pray, is the idea that Dole's tax cuts will exact a huge toll from Medicare and Medicaid. When Al D'Amato told Don Imus on the first day of the GOP convention that entitlement cuts would be needed to pay for Dole's tax cuts, the Clinton team got fax happy. "Bob Dole won't say how to pay for his tax plan," says George Stephanopoulos. "Al D'Amato just did."



JACK KEMP BY JEFFREY WONG FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Kemp's selection is sure to alter White House campaign strategy. After months of assuming Vice President Gore would share the debate stage with a bland governor or a blah senator, administration operatives must now decide how to deal with an adversary who looks presidential. This has raised the pressure within the White House to find someone to manage the fast-approaching presidential debates. Tom Donilon, who ran debate prep for Clinton in 1992, is ensconced at the State Department. Jack Quinn, who ran Gore's debate prep in '92, is now in the (supposedly) nonpartisan White House counsel's job. Washington lawyer Bob Barnett, who has been the stand-in for Republican opponents in mock debates, is out of commission because his wife, Rita Braver, covers the White House for CBS. The death of former Oklahoma Congressman Mike Synar leaves the White House looking for still another stand-in to replicate the dead-on Perot impersonation Synar did during the 1992 debate run-throughs. One thing the Dems are confident about is their convention, which, if all goes right, calls for a surprise appearance by Christopher Reeve, meant to be as dramatic as his Academy Awards appearance when he was wheeled onto an empty stage.

As part of the Dick Morrisesque refusal to cede any issue to the Republicans, the White House will unveil new proposals to compete with the Dole plan. When the president takes a train trip to the Chicago convention, he'll make stops in Huntington, West Virginia, Columbus, Ohio, and several stops in Michigan. The plan is to lay out a new Clinton proposal at each stop—a Head Start initiative in Ohio, more worker training in Michigan.

One of the more effective gimmicks in San Diego was having Kay Bailey Hutchison wave Clinton's 1992 *Putting People First* from the podium. The San Diego Republicans laughed at the book as a list of broken promises. But the irony was that Clinton didn't move left from his 1992 campaign bible; he moved right, away from Robert Reich's ideas of investment and training and toward modest deficit reduction and excise taxes. Now the Republicans have a clear, albeit flawed, plan for growth: cutting taxes. Clinton's reply is complex, nuanced, not nearly as simple as 1992's "putting people first" and not nearly as easy to sell as the Kempian cry of easy money. No wonder Ralph Reed is smiling. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

E WALL STREET JOURNAL.

© Dow Jones & Company

Business Bulletin

A Special Background Report
On Trends in Industry
And Finance

Car Chase

As Old Cadillac
Age, the GM D
Fights to Halt

But Young Fan
So Compar
A Smaller

Wooing New

Free software to get your finances going in the right direction.

Keeping your personal finances on track is no easy task. That's why The Wall Street Journal developed a helpful new software program called "Getting Going."

With just a few clicks of your mouse, "Getting Going" will show you the best places to invest your savings ... how big a mortgage you can afford ... or where you should invest your child's college fund.

There's also an investment organizer to help you classify your securities and an analyzer to give you an instant overview of your portfolio.

BEST OF ALL, "GETTING GOING" IS FREE WITH YOUR PAID SUBSCRIPTION TO THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Don't miss this great offer – 13 weeks of The Wall Street Journal for only $48! You get all the business news that has an impact on your career, your family, your life – and the valuable "Getting Going" software to help get your personal finances going in the right direction.

To subscribe, call toll-free 800-228-6609 or mail the coupon today.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
228 East 45th Street, Suite 1515
NEW YORK, NY 10017

Send me: ❑ 13 weeks for $48. ❑ 26 weeks for $86.
Only paid orders accepted.
Send my FREE "Getting Going" software for ❑ Windows ❑ Mac.
(For new paid subscribers only.)
❑ Check enclosed *(payable to The Wall Street Journal).*
Charge to: ❑ AmEx ❑ Diners Club ❑ Discover ❑ MC ❑ Visa

Card No. _____ Expires _____

Signature _____

Name *(please print)* _____

Address _____

City _____ Suite/Apt. _____

State _____ Zip _____

1NERE/3UXLW

Limited time offer – good in continental U.S. only.
©1996 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT'S A SMALL WORLD

By Michael Lewis

August 7:

I don't really expect anyone to answer the door of Bob Dole's house in Russell, Kansas, but I stop by anyway, just to see what might happen. When you travel with Dole, you see the world as it is constructed by the Dole campaign, until you almost forget there is a world outside where people do the unexpected. Indeed, as I reach for the screen door I half-wonder if some SWAT team will leap out of the bushes and haul me back to *Citizen's Ship* for questioning. But Dole is a few days behind me, and the neighborhood remains undisturbed by politics. The only sign that I'm in the right place is the faded pink mat beneath my feet: WELCOME TO THE HOME OF THE DOLES. After a single ring, the front door swings opens and an elderly woman steps outside. "Just cleaning up before Bob gets here," Bob Dole's sister, Gloria, says matter-of-factly. She then disappears inside, leaving the door open for me to follow. I do.

Bob Dole's boyhood home—his official residence, in fact—is instantly recognizable to anyone who had grandparents in the 1960s: 1960s old person's furniture (low-backed lounge chairs), 1960s old person's colors (unnatural shades of green), and 1960s old person's smells (1940s perfume). Over the roar of the 1960s vacuum cleaner, Gloria opens various drawers and tosses onto various counters items for me to inspect. The drawers contain hundreds of loose photographs of Dole in his youth that neither Gloria nor anyone else has looked at in years. One shot depicts Dole modeling clothes in a fashion show staged by a local department store; another shows him shirtless with his muscles slightly flexed. As a collection, they capture both Dole's natural obedience—he always poses—and his intense physical vanity. (How many 18-year-olds in 1940 lifted weights?) "He looks like a movie star," I say to Gloria. "He was a movie star," she says, quickly. "He *is* a movie star."

The whole thing happens so fast it seems only natural that I'm ransacking the home of the Republican presidential nominee. After a thorough search of the premises we move to the garage, passing, beside Dole's bed, a strange pair of little Black Sambo rag dolls of the sort they don't even allow in the South anymore. The inside of the garage is a welter of ancient possessions that have long since ceased to serve any useful purpose: five-pound cameras, medicine balls, that sort of thing. The outside is equally unremarkable save for the jury-rigged system of sausage-shaped weights that Dole used to rebuild his arm after the war. According to Gloria, the contraption has simply hung there for the past fifty years, untouched by time or fate. Dole just likes having it around.

As I watch the white rope spool through the eye of the silver pulley, I realize I am also watching Bob Dole's campaign in microcosm: somewhere Dole is either giving a speech or preparing to give a speech in which he invokes the place where I now stand and the things he once did here. "Now, let's just take Bob Dole," he'll say, typically. "Nothing special about me. I grew up in a small town. My dad wore his overalls to work every day for forty-two years and was proud of it. We grew up living in a basement apartment. Six of us. To make ends meet. In Russell, Kansas. We didn't have any money, but we had a lot of values." Then he will allude artfully to his war wound and his heroic recovery from it.

The insistence on the importance of events that occurred fifty years ago in a place where he hasn't lived for thirty-five years is more than a little strange. It's as if Dole has made a bargain with himself and with those who would judge him that enables him to cease all serious self-examination after the age of 25. The deal is something like this: Dole agrees to believe that it was worth it to have his arm and his vanities shattered for the sake of his country; in return the country agrees not to question what lurks inside him. Thanks to a single decision he made fifty years ago, he is forever the War Hero. It's a strangely stunted view of seventy-three years on the planet.

August 8-10

After three days in Russell I realize (a) that I can never quote anyone here saying anything truthful without bringing the wrath of the town down upon that person, and (b) that any scene or person I depict will be instantly recognizable to the entire population. I will try instead to summarize what I have learned, briefly.

Those who are attracted to Dole's vision of life in Russell, Kansas, need to spend a little time here. It turns out there's a reason ambitious people like Bob Dole have been fleeing the place in droves: while its mythical counterpart grows in stature, the actual Russell has been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

slowly withering. A bleak local economic history could be written from inside any store on Main Street. For example, the biggest and oldest store—a department store called Bankers, for which Dole modeled clothes—opened in 1881, ten years after Russell was founded, beside the new tracks laid by the Union Pacific Railroad. It prospered through the oil boom of the 1920s and the farming boom of the 1940s, reaching its apogee in the 1950s when it stocked three full floors of dry goods. Since then Bankers' business has gradually waned so that it now occupies barely one floor, some of which is given over to the sale of Bob Dole paraphernalia. Where once there were gardening tools there are now rows of Dole buttons, stickers, t-shirts and caps. The oldest family owned business in Kansas will probably soon close for lack of business and of a family member willing to live in Russell. "I'd manage the place," says one of the heirs, who lives in Kansas City, "but only if you put it on a truck and moved it to another town."

The economic history of Russell consists of a series of faraway events turning the place upside down: oil and wheat price fluctuations; railroad and highway construction; and, most recently, Bob Dole's national political career. The Dole campaign is Russell's last best hope for prosperity. If Dole wins, the town booms. Local estimates see the current population going from 4,700 to as high as 80,000. If Dole loses, Russell may join the thousands of other hamlets compiled in a five-volume local classic, *Ghost Towns of Kansas.*

So it is not surprising that the town kicks into full gear each time Dole arrives. In just a few days I watch Russell become "Russell." The newspaper generates thick special editions about Bob Dole, with "news" stories written by some of Dole's old pals. The Chamber of Commerce donates office space to the Dole advance people. The high-school band practices Dole's favorite song, and the adult choir works on its repertoire. People who ordinarily offer tours of town beg off. "The Dole campaign asked me to refer journalists to the Chamber of Commerce," one tells me. I know I'll never get a straight answer on the record when I stop a lady on the street and ask her if Russell strikes her as a good site for a presidential library. She pulls herself up and recites like a pro: "Russell is a small town that does things in a big way."

But it is true—as Dole repeatedly suggests—that Russell's value system is different from that of a big city. The difference springs less from the intrinsic qualities of Russell's citizens than from a single extrinsic circumstance: everyone who lives in Russell knows everyone else in Russell. This in turn leads people to be a bit more considerate. They fear that if they aren't, everyone will find out and they'll be ostracized. It does not even cross the mind of the owner of a local motel, for example, to raise his prices when the national media come to town and take every room in a fifty-mile radius. "That would be wrong," he says.

The power of the community obsesses and controls those within it. Residents of a big city are constantly reminded that the most important events of the day take place far away; residents in Russell are not. As a result, in a big city, events that occur far away—foreign policy, vacations in Borneo—acquire a ridiculous prestige. In a small town, the reverse is true: events that occur around the corner become ridiculously important. The world slowly shrinks until it is smaller than the town. When recently a small local businessman moved away, for instance, a rumor raced around town that he had gone to Detroit and acquired 51 percent of the Ford Motor Company. People believed it.

August 11:

Morry Taylor asks me to meet him in the parking lot by the San Diego Convention Center, but the convention center is closed, and the police who surround it have no idea where to find the parking lot. After a half-an-hour search, I ask a cop if he has seen 5,000 people on Harley Davidson motorcycles, the number Morry promised to deliver to the Dole campaign. Morry envisioned 5,000 bikers roaring into the convention center, where first Morry and then Dole would address them. Photo-op City! The cop looks at me as if I am mad. "How many?" he asks, incredulously. "Five thousand," I say. "There is no way you get 5,000 motorcycles anywhere near here," he says. For the first time since I met him seven months ago, I doubt Morry's ability to throw a party. How do you find 5,000 bikers, anyway?

Soon enough I find the parking lot. It lies directly behind a small cluster of protesters a half mile or so from the convention center. It consists of maybe four acres of concrete at the back of which is a stage. Over the stage is an American flag and in front of the flag a huge banner. It reads, "Titan: America's Newest Tire Company." (That's Morry's company.) On the stage are five large black men playing loud instruments, each of whom wears a bandanna that says, "The Grizz." (That's Morry.) At the front of the stage, with a cigar jutting straight out from his mouth, gyrating slightly to the funk is Morry. He's just received the first of several insults at the hands of the Republican Party. Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld has been dropped from the program after he protested his assignment: to introduce a brief video of Morry's endorsement of Dole.

The roar of approaching motorcycles soon drowns out everything. Not 5,000 but 7,000 motorcycles are streaming across a bridge; they are ridden by 7,000 Republicans and led by half the United States Congress and various local bigwigs. Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott, Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Dick Armey. An aerial photograph will later show a thick line of more than two miles of Harley Davidsons. But, from the moment the bikers arrive at the gates, the Dole campaign ensures that pretty much everything goes wrong. Dole's promise to attend causes the police to keep 6,800 bikers out on the highway; letting them in will prove too much of a security risk, they say. The thick line dutifully comes to a halt and the bikers wait, restlessly. The Dole campaign goes back and forth until everyone is thoroughly unhappy. Then the political speeches begin,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

starting with Trent Lott and ending with New York Mike, a local Harley dealer. ("We're bikers, right? And we're tired of being discriminated against. We're tired of helmet laws.... ")

An hour or so later the Dole campaign finally admits that Dole won't be coming. The effect is immediate: the senators and congressmen vanish. As the politicians exit out the back gate, the 3,000 or so bikers who remain on the highway enter through the front. Morry claims most of the bikers are actually doctors and lawyers, but these are doctors and lawyers with wild, big bellies and long facial hair; to a man they are covered in patches. Their most popular cause by far is the Vietnam War; every one is either a veteran or a friend of a veteran. "Hanoi Jane: Traitor By Choice, Commie By Injection," reads a typical armband.

The event quickly degenerates into an enjoyable experience. The glee on Morry's face as the bikers—he was already calling them "my bikers"—roar into the lot calls to mind a small child on Christmas morning. "It's the only event at the convention that is open to everybody and you don't have to pay," he shouts, by way of explanation of the turnout. The bikers for their part seem thrilled, especially when Morry moonwalks across the stage and hurls Grizz t-shirts into the raucous crowd. As he does the band strikes up a new song:

It's your thing
Do what you gotta do
I can't tell you
What not to do

A thousand more bikers swarm around him in a scene reminiscent of Mardi Gras. "I don't want to be here when they run out of food," he shouts back to me, over his shoulder, as he hurls a Grizz cap into the crowd. "If they run out of food it's gonna get ugly." They run out of food. Luckily, at the rear exit a white stretch limo awaits. In a final flourish Morry throws out his hands like St. Francis displaying the stigmata. Then he's gone.

Five hours later, I sit behind Ollie North's family watching Pat Buchanan take the stage at a rally in Escondido. Buchanan's going to remain inside the Republican Party—that much we know from the advance copies of the speech distributed by his staff. What we don't know is how his followers will take the news. One moment at the start of the ceremony speaks volumes about what Buchanan's followers are up to, as opposed to what Buchanan claims he's up to. After the Pledge of Allegiance, a claque at the back of the room tacked on a pro-life appendix. "Born and unborn," they shout. When I express astonishment that they have dared to amend the Pledge of Allegiance, a fellow journalist gives me a where-have-you-been-look and explains that they have also re-written "The Star-Spangled Banner" to incorporate some pro-life language.

Nothing illustrates so well how anti-conservative Buchanan's movement truly is. Its goal is not to conserve the past but to advance a radical agenda. Given this, it will be difficult to yoke these people to an old-fashioned conservative cause like the Dole campaign. It's like trying to transform a lightning bolt into useful current. That is Dole's real problem here: temperamentally he is conservative. Every fiber in his body is intent on denying anything radical from ever again changing his life.

For the moment, Dole has been saved by the platform. To see why the Dole campaign ceded to the rabid pro-lifers the platform but not the podium you need only flip through a copy of the document. It offers a neat illustration of the political uses of bad writing. Pick up a copy of the 1964 Republican platform and you find a slim, elegant, terse statement of beliefs, mostly shared by the candidate. The whole document ran nineteen pages. The 1996 platform is 100 pages of blather that Bob Dole wouldn't be caught dead reading, and neither would you. Or so Dole hopes.

August 12:

In the lobby of John McCain's hotel, I am first plowed over by Steve Forbes; from there I nearly kick the leg of a table occupied by Norman Mailer; and so by the time I reach a senator from Alaska I am too jaded to notice. Such is life at the Republican convention, where you can't strike up a conversation without being charged a lecture fee.

Ever since I met him late one night in a private air terminal in South Carolina, McCain has caused me problems. I know well enough how to talk to an important person who shades the truth; they all do that. But I don't know how to interview an honest man. So a strange reversal occurs whenever I speak with McCain. I know I should be plumbing him for information, trying to get him to say things he shouldn't, the usual journalist thing. But the minute he opens his mouth he says something impolitic on the record, and some inner voice cries out in me: "For God's sake, don't say that! There might be a journalist around!"

A couple of weeks ago the Dole campaign asked McCain to speak during prime time on the subjects of honor and duty. God knows what this means to the Dole campaign, though McCain believes it means a lot to Dole. McCain sent in a draft of a six-minute talk that the Dole campaign revised heavily. "No words more than two syllables," is how McCain describes the revision. Every freelance magazine writer knows the feeling, I say, then immediately realize McCain's position was different. At the time of this exchange he was a leading candidate to be Dole's running mate. This makes it all the more remarkable that he told the Dole campaign to stuff it. He pulled his speech and became an inspiration to freelance writers everywhere. The campaign then caved and said McCain could deliver his speech as written.

After breakfast McCain drops me at the convention center in time to see Haley Barbour open the proceedings. (No matter how he tries, Barbour always looks as if he is talking with his mouth full of food.) Inside there are about 2,000 delegates, all of whom paid their way. Against this is set 15,000 journalists, all on corporate expense accounts. The best piece to be written about

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the 1996 Republican convention is a search for the journalist who has the least compelling reason to be here. Compared to some people here, the TV crew from the Netherlands seems as if it is on a crucial assignment. ("I think I secured the Dutch vote," says McCain, after a brief interview.)

By late afternoon, I find Morry. He looks surprised whenever anyone recognizes him. One Fox TV crew even stopped to interview him. "Mr. Taylor," begins the reporter. "What do you mean with this Mr. Taylor shit?" asks Morry. "Morry?" says the reporter, uncertainly. "The Grizz!" booms Morry. I tell him that just a few hours earlier a man named Ed Harrison took the podium and started his speech with the immortal words, "Now I'm not a politician. And I'm not a lawyer. I'm a businessman." He had stolen Morry's precise words. This, too, Morry can't quite believe. He hasn't entirely grasped the power of the modern media.

I have decided it's finally time to leave him, and I'm wondering how to break the news. The Taylor campaign has come to an end, at least for the moment. We've stood together for maybe twenty minutes, and no one in the audience of freshly scrubbed, white, prosperous, shiny happy faces seems to recognize him. Then suddenly a voice calls out, "Mr. Taylor?" A handsome young man in a wheelchair presents himself. "Are you Mr. Taylor?" he asks. The achingly earnest look on the man's face is one I've seen 10,000 times. Every time it dents my ability to suspect anyone of anything but sincerity. I become, momentarily, a Midwesterner. The young man in the wheelchair is from Ohio. He's gazing up at Morry, with feeling. He wants a picture with him. Morry is touched, but he hides it well. "You're a great American, sir," says the young man. "Give me your address," says Morry, as I snap his photo. "I'll send you a box of Grizz stuff."

I have forgotten the general rule of American politics: if you hang with Morry Taylor, the action will follow. It continues to obtain. We're sitting in the section reserved for the primary candidates when Pat Buchanan appears for the first time. He's already got maybe fifty journalists with him; he quickly accumulates another hundred, plus several hundred delegates keen to shake his hand. The result is a human tsunami that breaks across about a third of the convention hall and lays waste to anything in its path. "People are being trampled!" an enormous security guard shouts into his wrist mike. "Send me fifty people!"

The crowd at the convention has its own logic, however: people merely attract more people. For every added security man, three curiosity seekers join in. Every appearance by a significant politician attracts a mob. The bigger fish know better than to stop any place; when they need to cross the hall, they race walk before the mob can congeal.

So as Buchanan circles the hall, the tension rises. He's like a ball bearing in a roulette wheel before it stops on a number. At length he comes to rest in the seat directly behind Morry. Fully one-third of the convention is watching him and ignoring George W. Bush, who is speaking piously from the podium (" ... open up a child daycare center at your church or synagogue...") "I need more help here!" blares the guard into his wrist. "Send help! Send help!!" Then Buchanan notices Morry.

"Morry Taylor is the problem here!" he shouts, mockingly. "He's ruined the convention."

"Did they do this to you when you got here, Morry?" shouts Bay Buchanan, joining her brother in ganging up on Morry. It seems needlessly cruel. Morry stands alone watching. "It's you, Pat," says Morry. "Leave Shelley with me, and take these people out in the street." The two former rivals vie to condescend to one another. Buchanan is winning on points until he pushes it one inch too far. "Where the keg, Morry?" he shouts. "Go get the keg."

Morry looks up, licks his lip, and says, "Hey Pat. You're unemployed now." Then he turns to the cameras. "He needs a job," Morry explains to the world's news media. "Or else he'll have to take unemployment."

From the right appears Steve Forbes with his family in tow, and the sight of him clearly arouses some feelings of solidarity in Morry. Here they are: the losers of the primary. Relegated to rows fifty-eight and fifty-nine out of sixty. "They chased poor Lamar out of here," says Morry, forlornly.

Gerald Ford and George Bush speak, but no one around Buchanan listens. All eyes focus on the troublemaker, who is giving serial interviews to the networks. At last Nancy Reagan appears to eulogize Ronnie. (Republicans behave as if he has already died, whereas Nixon, who has actually died, is treated as if he were still alive.)

Then comes what I am sure will be the defining moment of the convention: Colin Powell, who is now at the podium, raises his voice above the crowd and proclaims his belief in abortion rights. The convention rises to its feet to applaud. I turn around and meet Buchanan's gaze. "Any reaction?" I ask, idiotically. (In these circumstances it is as a rule impossible to think of a decent question.) "What?" he says. "Any reaction?" I shout. But the noise from the crowd is too loud.

Just in front of Morry, oddly enough, there is a man dressed in a robe. On the back of it is a sign that reads:

> Diogenes went through the streets carrying a lantern. He held it up to strangers and said he was looking for an honest man.

Dole has invited Morry to join him on stage on Thursday night, but Morry has for the second time in as many days declined Dole's invitation. He figures it will merely be another meaningless free-for-all, with everyone who ever thought of running for office crammed onto the stage. Although Morry's aides plead with me to try to change his mind, I can't tell him he's wrong. It's nothing personal, though he is still irritated that Dole lacked the sense to address 7,000 raving loyalists on motorcycles. Convention life is less than it's cranked up to be, he's decided. In the morning his plane will take him and his friends to Las Vegas. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Proposition 187 backfires.

THE BROWNING OF CALIFORNIA

By Gregory Rodríguez

When California Republicans championed Proposition 187 in 1994, they hoped the anti-illegal immigrant measure would unleash a demographic and political transformation in the state. Two years later, as the GOP gathers in San Diego for its convention, it has. But it's not the transformation Governor Pete Wilson imagined. Instead of stemming the "browning" of California, Prop 187 has spurred non-citizen Latinos to naturalize in unprecedented numbers, a trend that will dramatically increase Latino political power in America's most populous state. And instead of riding the immigration backlash to political ascendance, state Republicans are facing a different backlash, by newly politicized Latinos hungry to punish the GOP at the polls.

Although 187 targeted illegal aliens—who even in Los Angeles County, which has the largest undocumented population in the state, account for only 15 to 20 percent of foreign-born Latinos—many legal immigrants felt tarred. The California Coalition for Immigration Reform, which sponsored the initiative, exaggerated the number of undocumented immigrants and muddied the distinction between legals and illegals. At pro-187 meetings and rallies, proponents demonized Mexicans as violent and parasitic. As a result, even second- and third-generation Latino-Americans, many of whom themselves favored curbing illegal immigration, feared the Prop 187-inspired hysteria would lead to discrimination against all Latinos. Three weeks before the vote, protesters staged one of the largest demonstrations in Los Angeles history, as more than 70,000 people marched through downtown L.A.

Although California voters approved 187 on Election Day, Latinos went to the polls in record numbers to oppose it. While Latinos have historically turned out in much smaller numbers than other groups, 57 percent of registered Latinos voted in 1994, according to Southwest Voter Research Institute, only three percentage points less than the electorate as a whole. The turnout of registered voters gave Latinos a newfound sense of political muscle. This power was bolstered by California's continuing demographic trends: even if all Latin American immigration, legal and illegal, had been stopped on Election Day '94, the disparity between Anglo and Latino birthrates would still give California a Latino majority by the year 2040.

Even more important than the galvanizing of registered Latinos was the impact 187 had on permanent resident aliens. Historically, California's Latin American immigrants, most of whom are of Mexican origin, have had among the lowest rates of naturalization of any ethnic group. Of the state's 5 million adult Latinos, more than 2 million are permanent resident aliens and thus can't vote. Immigrants from Latin America, who live closer to their countries of origin than do Europeans and Asians, are generally loath to cut those ties. What's more, many Latinos hail from countries that have manipulated anti-Yankee sentiment to promote national unity. In Mexico, becoming "North American" has been seen as a betrayal of one's culture. One myth held that new citizens had to stomp on the Mexican flag before swearing allegiance to the United States. Many Latinos wound up straddling the border, living in the U.S. without becoming citizens.

Prop 187 has started to change this. Only weeks after the measure was passed, House Republicans in Washington drafted legislation to exclude most legal immigrants from sixty federal programs, including Medicaid, Food Stamps and welfare (the bill was a precursor to the recently passed welfare reform legislation that denies legal immigrants everything from Supplemental Security Income benefits to Food Stamps). News of the proposal hit the front page of *La Opinión*, L.A.'s Spanish-language daily, on Christmas morning, 1994. For the past year and a half, the Spanish-language news media have diligently covered anti-immigrant legislation in Congress, and the news confirmed what many resident aliens feared: that the anti-illegal immigrant campaign was only a prelude to the anti-immigrant campaign.

School districts and community-based organizations that offer citizenship classes experienced huge leaps in enrollment after Wilson began his anti-illegal immigrant campaign, and the number of citizenship applicants in California rose by 500 percent since 1992. The Los Angeles Unified School District, the largest

GREGORY RODRIGUEZ, an associate editor at Pacific News Service, is a fellow at the Pepperdine Institute for Public Policy and the Alta California Research Center in Los Angeles.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provider of citizenship classes in the nation, had 30,000 students enrolled for the 1994-95 school year—three times higher than the previous year's enrollment and 100 times higher than the average for the previous eight years. Proposition 187 also dovetailed with the end of the five-year waiting period that the more than 1 million Latino amnesty applicants in California had to undergo before becoming eligible to seek citizenship. The L.A. district office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the busiest in the nation, is now receiving about 25,000 applications for citizenship a month. And it doesn't expect the numbers to decline anytime soon. Most Latino immigrants say they want to become citizens to participate in electoral politics. The Southwest Voter Research Institute predicts that the number of Latino registered voters in California will jump 40 percent by the year 2000.

Anti-immigration talk has pushed these new voters into the Democratic Party. In recent years, California Republicans had routinely won up to two-fifths of the Latino vote. Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan received 43 percent in 1993. "The Hispanic-American community has long identified themselves with our beliefs—it is time they identified themselves with our party," wrote California Republican Party Chairman John Herrington in a May 1995 memo to the state party leadership. While both major parties regularly set up registration booths outside naturalization ceremonies, the Republicans generally outpace the Democrats in developing ways to appeal to new Latino voters, and the GOP still thinks it can attract nearly half of newly naturalized voters.

Until the 187 debate, 60 percent of Latino immigrants eligible for citizenship said they hadn't decided which political party they would join once naturalized, according to a survey conducted by the Tomas Riverá Center. "Before Wilson and Prop 187, the Latino vote was up for grabs," says Harry Pachón of the center. But in a poll taken last November at an L.A.-area citizenship class, 90 percent of the students said they would register Democratic. Initial results of a phone survey conducted by the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials indicate that up to 80 percent of newly naturalized Latino immigrants are registering Democrat. The new GOP platform, which would deny citizenship to the children of illegal immigrants born on U.S. soil, is likely to hurt the party's image among Latinos even further.

Nowhere will the rise in Latino citizenship be felt more dramatically than around Los Angeles. Together, L.A. and Orange Counties include five of the eight congressional districts with the fewest eligible voters in the country. One in three adult residents of the city of Los Angeles were not citizens at the time of the last mayoral election. In East Los Angeles, an unincorporated section of the county, only 12 percent of adult residents were U.S. citizens in 1990. While lack of civic proprietorship and responsibility is a national problem crossing ethnic boundaries, the huge number of Latino non-citizens in Los Angeles has made the situation all the more serious. It has weakened social stability and the local quality of life. In the next two years, L.A. County stands to gain as many as 200,000 naturalized registered voters. Hundreds of thousands more will follow before the end of the decade. In Los Angeles, the rush to citizenship will foster much-needed stability. Hundreds of thousands of immigrants who have already voted with their feet are now likely to assume a greater role in their city's civic life.

It will also affect the racial makeup of L.A.'s political leadership. For more than fifteen years, African Americans have been leaving the inner city for suburbs in and beyond Los Angeles County. Latino immigrants, drawn by cheap and available housing, have moved in. L.A. City Councilwoman Rita Walters, state Assemblywoman Marguerite Archie-Hudson and Congresswoman Maxine Waters are among the many black elected officials whose districts contain tens of thousands of immigrants eligible for citizenship. At the time of Walters's last election, only 10 percent of the voters in her district were Latino. Mass naturalization will doubtless change that, and may affect her political viability. "You have to be realistic," Walters says. "I understand if people want a person of their own ethnicity to represent them. A good portion of the African American struggle was around the issue of having participation at all levels." Political scientist Fernando Guerra of Loyola Marymount University, who has studied black and Latino politics in L.A., believes the number of local, state and federal seats currently held by blacks could be halved within a decade.

Most of the increase in foreign-born registered voters will occur in districts already represented by Latinos. The only congressional districts in L.A. County whose number of registered voters did not decline in the usual post-presidential attrition are the two districts with the greatest numbers of naturalizing immigrants: Xavier Becerra's 30th and Lucille Roybal-Allard's 33rd. Roybal-Allard, whose district has the highest percentage of non-citizen residents and the lowest number of voters in the country, expects representatives of districts like hers to gain in political power. The agendas of representatives based in Latino districts will, for the first time, have the weight of numbers behind them. A larger, more diversified and active electorate will simultaneously make Latino politicians more accountable to their constituents. It may also serve to give backbone to what has previously been a reactive and tepid Latino political agenda.

According to Fernando Guerra, new citizen voters, along with the hundreds of thousands of U.S.-born Latinos who will turn 18 in L.A. County in the next ten years, could even install a Latino mayor in L.A. City Hall by 2005. More significantly, the mass enfranchisement of immigrant Latinos promises to heighten the sense of civic responsibility in this once politically feckless ethnic group. That's no small accomplishment, for it is upon the productivity and leadership of Latinos that the future well-being of America's most populous state depends. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A recipe of taxes, Kemp and a handful of states.

How Bob Dole Can Win

By Charles E. Cook Jr.

Is Bob Dole's campaign hopeless? Two weeks ago, it seemed unquestionably so. Polls put the Republican nominee twenty points down. The pundits all but laughed at his candidacy. Among Republican political professionals, the pessimism was overwhelming. Many conceded privately that only an unexpected, external event—a foreign policy crisis, a sudden economic downturn, devastating revelations in the Whitewater/FBI files scandals—could keep Bill Clinton from winning reelection.

By the GOP convention, however, a palpably different spirit had taken hold among Republicans. While the party's pros still understood the long odds of Dole's challenge, a win at least no longer seemed dependent upon an act of God. And where the pros cautiously hoped, the delegates and activists were downright exhilarated. Absent was the dark cloud that seemed to have settled over the party in recent months. The ugly fight over abortion and sour relations with arch-conservative renegade Pat Buchanan seemed less relevant, less troubling.

This small but perceptible change in the general attitude toward a Dole victory, this incipient sense of possibility, began with the unveiling of Dole's economic package. For all the beating it's taken in the press, the plan was an important and shrewd move. Leave aside the mighty appeal, seen over four presidential elections, that taxes hold for all who vote their pocketbooks; even if Dole's plan doesn't win many Democratic defectors or independent voters, the issue unifies Republicans better than any other. As one GOP pollster suggested, tax cuts are the closest thing to an orthodoxy the Republican Party has. Many party activists and elected officials believe tax cuts propelled Ronald Reagan to his victory over President Jimmy Carter in 1980 and Christine Todd Whitman to her upset of New Jersey Democratic Governor Jim Florio in 1993 (even if they really owed their triumphs simply to being not Carter or Florio). Dole's tax cut proposals matter because they have begun to mend a party that was badly divided and dispirited. They offer a common bond.

Dole's selection of former Representative and Housing Secretary Jack Kemp as his running mate was also an inspired choice—the most helpful choice conceivable, short of former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell. Religious and social conservatives never really saw Dole as one of them, nor did the supply-siders who often had felt the sting of his sharp tongue. Even moderates, executives and "country-club" Republicans felt as though Dole had abandoned them. Kemp appeals to all of these groups. He's created an enthusiasm within the party that Dole himself could not elicit.

Finally, the convention itself—just getting underway as of this writing—is sure to help. A party's convention almost always provides a "bounce" for its nominee. An NBC News Elections Unit study found that, since 1964, a nominee gained on average 5.4 percentage points in the polls after his party's convention. Democratic pollster Fred Yang notes that this year's pre-convention polls overstated Clinton's lead because Dole was unrealistically underperforming among those in his own party. Since the famed convention "bounce" is largely about consolidating party support, Dole will likely enjoy a bigger-than-usual post-convention lift. And, unlike in 1992, tame speakers fill the prime-time slots, precluding any Buchanan-style rhetoric that would scare away moderates.

Soon, though, the convention bounce will end, and Dole will still need to address several longer-term challenges if he is to win. Foremost, he must identify specific blocs of voters among whom he is underperforming, and among whom he can improve his standing. Pollster Linda DiVall, a Dole adviser, points to two such groups: Republicans and white women. Gaining stature among the first group, his own party-mates, is Dole's most dire task. An early August *Los Angeles Times* poll, taken before the Kemp selection, found that, while Clinton trounced Dole by eighty-four percentage points among self-described Democrats, Dole led among Republicans by only fifty-eight points. Before Dole can win over independents and pick off moderate Democrats, he must shore up support within his own party. The combination of his new economic proposal, the selection of Kemp and a successful convention should get Dole close to the 90 percent level of intra-party support that DiVall suggests he needs.

CHARLES E. COOK JR. is editor and publisher of *The Cook Political Report*, an independent, non-partisan newsletter that analyzes U.S. elections.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dole must also break even, according to DiVall, among white women. Recent polls have shown Dole trailing Clinton by eleven to eighteen points in this category. That the gender gap has disfavored Republicans for a long time doesn't relieve Dole of the burden of having to close it. This will mean downplaying such controversial issues as abortion, the House Republicans' vote to repeal the federal ban on assault weapons and other perceived excesses of the 104th Congress.

Presidential elections, though, are technically decided not by nationwide surveys but by electoral votes. Given that a winner-take-all system is used in every state but Nebraska and Maine, the Electoral College vote, in most presidential elections, is just an exaggeration of the popular vote. Practically speaking, it becomes important only if an election is so close as to fall within the three- or four-point margin of error in the national polls. Since a landslide is next to impossible, Dole must, after closing the gap nationally, target particular states to wage his campaign.

Like any Republican candidate, Dole has something of a natural advantage in the Electoral College. Although Clinton's 1992 election victory debunked the once widely held notion that the Republicans had a "lock" on the Electoral College, there is still a pro-Republican tilt to it. Because each state gets one electoral vote for each of its U.S. representatives and senators, sparsely populated states are overrepresented and populous states underrepresented. California, for example, has fifty-four electoral votes, one for every 582,055 people; Wyoming has three electoral votes, one for every 158,333 people. Of the less populated states, only the District of Columbia (a state for these purposes), Rhode Island, Hawaii and West Virginia reliably vote Democratic, while fourteen small states usually vote Republican, mostly in the West. This gives the Republicans a head start in almost any tight race: with fairly small numbers of voters, they secure an electoral advantage over the Democrats—before the dynamics of national politics even kick in.

Even with this advantage, Dole needs a state-by-state plan. One such recipe for a Dole victory has been offered by Rich Bond, the former Republican National Committee chairman. First, Bond says, Dole has to stand tall in California. Even if he ultimately loses there, he can't be perceived as forfeiting the largest state in the country. If for no other reason, Dole has to close the gap in California enough to force Clinton to spend money to defend what is for him a must-win state. This could divert Clinton's resources. A strong San Diego convention and the selection of Kemp, a native Californian, could help Dole with this task.

Next, Bond says, Dole has to "stitch together the West and South." In 1992, Clinton managed to carry Montana, Nevada, Colorado and New Mexico, four states that had been in the GOP column in every election since Lyndon Johnson won them in 1964. Today Clinton is favored in New Mexico, and Colorado is a close call, while Dole probably has a slight edge in Montana and Nevada. While New Mexico might be expendable for Dole, he certainly needs to carry the other three. In the South, meanwhile, Dole was, as of early August, leading only in Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina, three states that are all but constitutionally incapable of voting Democratic for president. While Dole could afford to sacrifice Arkansas, he must carry almost every other Southern state to win the general election. And as of now, even if he gains substantially in national polls, some states, such as Louisiana and Kentucky, will still go down to the wire.

Dole will have to go all out in the Midwest. Michigan and Ohio, with eighteen and twenty-one electoral votes, have long been the two most important states in any close presidential election. Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin and to a lesser extent Iowa are also part of a vital grouping that will likely attract the most money and the greatest expenditure of candidate time in a tight race. Outside the heartland, New Jersey, too, will require a great effort if Dole is to win its fifteen electoral votes and numerous swing voters (an expensive one, too: candidates must buy their TV ads in New York City to reach the northern part of the state and in Philadelphia to reach the southern end). Finally, Dole would help himself a lot if he picked off Pennsylvania, Connecticut or Maine. All three states tilt Democratic but could be hijacked.

The bottom line is that Dole must carry the South (except Arkansas), every state that touches the Great Lakes (except either Illinois or Pennsylvania), every Mountain State (except New Mexico), New Hampshire, both North and South Dakota, and Alaska. But that lineup makes it sound bleaker than it is: Dole could quite plausibly retake the South if he surges nationally, and challenge Clinton in the Midwest if he devotes serious time and money to that pivotal region.

This equation is unlikely to be affected by Ross Perot's candidacy, since the expected Reform Party nominee probably won't win any states outright. But Perot could change the calculus within various states.

Perot's likely role in this year's race is deceptive. In the national polls, Perot appears to pull voters equally from both Clinton and Dole, or even a little more from Clinton. Surveys suggest that as many as half of the people who voted for Perot in 1992 won't do so again. Compared to those who are remaining loyal to Perot, the disillusioned Perotistas are older, better educated and more affluent: in short, more Republican than Democratic. That seems to hurt Clinton more than Dole. Besides, with Clinton leading Dole by large margins, he simply has more points to give up to Perot or another third candidate than does Dole.

Yet Perot's probable effect on the Electoral College tally is altogether different: he will hurt Dole much more than Clinton. In 1992 Perot tipped to Clinton a number of states that no Democrat has won in decades. Perot runs strongest in the Mountain West, usually a Republican stronghold in presidential elections. Perot's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presence helped throw Colorado, Montana and Nevada into the Democratic column that year. In 1996, Perot could fare well enough in Florida, Missouri, Colorado, Montana and Nevada to give Clinton a legitimate shot in those states. Either the Dole campaign itself, state Republican parties or some independent groups will have to air ads in these states to refresh voters' memories about every kooky thing Perot has ever said—in the hope of keeping the Texan's support in single digits.

Of course, to beat back Perot, to win key Electoral College states and to improve his standing with important voter blocs, Dole needs to buttress his message to the voters. Despite the claims of Steve Forbes and others, tax cuts, for all their allure, aren't enough. On the contrary, they're just the beginning.

Bill McInturff, a GOP pollster, argues that Dole and Republicans must focus on income and wages, not just taxes. McInturff, whose firm advised the Dole campaign in 1995 and early 1996, emphasizes that Dole must be seen as "connecting with their [voters'] problems," the struggles that average families face every day—the strategy that pollster Stan Greenberg helped Clinton ride to victory in 1992. Republican Ed Goeas is one of many pollsters (and other analysts) who argue that the candidate who effectively addresses, or at least articulates, these middle-class concerns has an inside track to winning their votes in November. Although Dole can't plausibly argue that the economy isn't doing well, he can point out that Clinton hasn't eased the plight of many working- and middle-class families in the last four years.

A growing number of Americans feel so economically squeezed that they must take on second or even third jobs, start small businesses on the side or work grueling ten- to twelve-hour days to gain overtime pay—all just to tread water, not to get ahead. Salaried, white-collar employees are also working harder than ever, striving to impress supervisors and save themselves from being "downsized" out of their jobs. Both groups face a crushing workload and little sign of relief.

Such overloaded work schedules leave many parents feeling they have too little time to spend with their children or aging parents or to maintain a household. Relaxation, recreation or community involvement become expendable luxuries. A decent quality of life becomes elusive. Baby-boomers' worries about their children's future are fed by the demise of what many recall (or imagine) as the orderly world of their past. They see their children assaulted by new temptations, unsupported by traditional values.

This confluence of economic and "values" issues will prove critical in 1996. While Americans don't expect their elected officials to solve every problem, they do seemed starved for politicians that hear and acknowledge their fears and apprehensions and take some modest but tangible steps toward addressing them. Between his rightward tack on values and his support for such traditional Democratic stand-bys as a minimum wage hike, Clinton seems once again to be embracing this strategy. Dole must contest him for it, as President Bush failed to do during 1991 and '92. Dole's rhetoric surrounding his economic plan, which has attacked Clinton for letting down wage-earners, suggests he will make a concerted effort to woo the struggling middle class.

But understanding and empathizing with the economic woes of middle-class families won't put Dole over the top. Clinton will always prove hard to beat in his capacity for empathy. Polls have long showed that most Americans agree that Clinton "cares about" people like them. Yet the same polls show sizable majorities also believe Clinton says what he thinks they want to hear. That the same population can believe both is telling. Clearly, voters have grave doubts about the sincerity of the president's words.

To win this election, Dole will have to challenge Clinton on the issue of voters' trust. Dole's message, in a nutshell, will have to be something like the following: "Bill Clinton and I are very different people. I'm not a smooth talker or fancy speaker. I can't give flowery speeches the way he can. But I will tell you the truth. The cold, unvarnished truth." Dole could thus in one stroke play to doubts about Clinton's integrity and transform his own weaknesses on the stump into a virtue.

In early 1992, former Senator Paul Tsongas struck a responsive chord among moderate to conservative Democrats with a similar truth-telling appeal. Voters saw it as refreshing, a politician willing to lay the facts on the line for everyone to see. Though Tsongas later faltered, the power of the message was there. Much of Ross Perot's strength in '92 derived from his similar approach.

Dole can attack Clinton's trustworthiness in any number of ways. For example, in targeting voters under 40 years of age—who Goeas argues constitute another important group for Dole to court—Dole can say, "The cold truth is that people under 40 will never see Social Security, most are totally unprepared for retirement. The truth hurts, but we must see it and deal with it. I will, Bill Clinton hasn't." Alternately (or additionally), Dole could strike at Clinton's integrity and reclaim the advantage on cultural issues by charging that Clinton has unconditionally surrendered the war on drugs, citing substantial cutbacks in funds for drug interdiction and the prosecution of drug crimes. Given the stories suggesting past drug use by White House staffers, this could be troublesome for the Clinton campaign to rebut.

A revitalized and unified Republican Party emerging from San Diego can lift Dole past the intramural sniping that has crippled him so far. A targeted strategy to win over key states and constituencies can make the Electoral College seem conquerable. And a disciplined campaign in which Dole taps into voters' distaste for Clinton while assuring them that he, too, has a modicum of empathy for their plight can simultaneously erode Clinton's support nationally while bolstering his own. Suddenly, a Dole triumph in November is not so hard to imagine after all. •

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE HARD QUESTIONS

Easy virtue

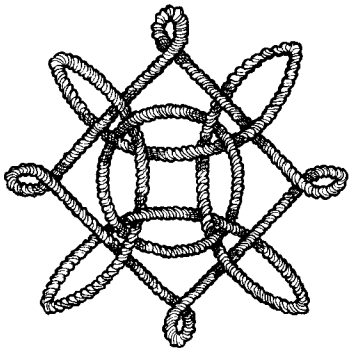
Ever since Richard Nixon won the presidency by standing for law and order and against the counterculture, Democrats have been on the defensive about values. Until now. In one of the great reversals of contemporary American politics, Bill Clinton has seized the upper hand in the politics of virtue. Over the past year, Clinton has promoted the V-chip, curfews and school uniforms, and condemned teenage pregnancy, smoking and truancy. Some mock this agenda as a litany of small favors, and wonder when the president will come out against cussing. But, as Republicans have known for some time, easy virtue goes a long way in American politics, longer perhaps than more strenuous versions.

No one understood this better than Ronald Reagan. He skillfully evoked family and neighborhood, religion and patriotism, even while promoting an unfettered capitalism that undermined the traditions and communities he praised. Other Republicans followed. George Bush, who invoked values more out of strategy than conviction, posed in a flag factory and introduced us to Willie Horton. Dan Quayle criticized the television character Murphy Brown for bearing a child out of wedlock. William Bennett led a campaign against the violent lyrics of rap music. Patrick Buchanan demanded that we "take back our culture and take back our country."

Democrats, meanwhile, resisted the politics of virtue, not by disputing conservatives' particular moral judgments but by rejecting the idea that moral judgments have a place in the public realm. When Republicans tried to ban abortion, oppose gay rights or promote school prayer, liberals replied that government should not legislate morality or concern itself with the moral character of citizens. Turning statecraft into soulcraft, they argued, runs the risk of coercion. Politics should not be about telling people how to live but about giving people the freedom to choose for themselves.

The liberals' insistence that politics be neutral on moral and religious matters was misguided in principle and costly in practice. As a philosophical matter, it is by no means clear that government can or should be neutral on the pressing moral questions of the day. The civil rights laws legislated morality, and rightly so. Not only did they ban odious practices, like the segregation of lunch counters; they also aimed at changing moral sentiments.

Philosophy aside, the Democrats' rejection of the politics of virtue carried a high price, for it left conservatives with a monopoly on moral discourse in politics. This helped Republicans win five of the six presidential elections between 1968 and 1988. Bill Clinton finally broke the pattern, winning as a "New Democrat" who stressed responsibility as well as rights. But Clinton's success at wresting the values issue from Republicans became clear only in the summer of 1996.



Two things made it possible. The first was the Republican takeover of Congress in the mid-term elections. Once Clinton could no longer hope to legislate, he fell back on the presidency's rhetorical dimension. And with the bully pulpit comes an invitation to soulcraft.

The second was the nomination of Bob Dole, a man who lacks both the gift and the taste for talk of virtue. In his one valiant attempt to bring morals to bear on markets, he delivered a speech in Hollywood a year ago denouncing movie-makers for pandering to the public's taste for violence, sex and depravity. But his heart was not in it. He recently returned to Hollywood to declare that there was no conflict between markets and morals after all. Movie-makers could make plenty of money by catering to our nobler instincts, as in the box office hit *Independence Day*, a high-tech shoot-up about alien space invaders. No longer the scolding prophet, Dole now spoke as an earnest public relations consultant. "In Hollywood today, the big story is that responsibility is good business. You can watch your ratings rise and your box-office receipts go up and still look yourself in the mirror." The ticket window, Dole argued, was a "cultural ballot box" that proved Americans' preference for "the good over the grotesque, excellence over exploitation, quiet virtue over gratuitous violence."

Faced with the need to energize his candidacy, Dole had to choose between the two great enthusiasms of modern Republican politics: the moral fervor of the religious right or the tax-cutting fervor of the supply-side true-believers. Weary of the abortion struggle that has divided his party, Dole opted for the second, leaving Clinton an opening on the values front. In an interview on values with *USA Today*, Dole could not conceal his impatience with the whole subject. His acceptance speech, he said, would be "pretty heavy on values." He would make the point that "it doesn't take a village, it takes a family. And whatever." But even this grudging concession to the politics of virtue seemed to offend his laconic sensibility. "What, do you run around saying, 'I'm the Values Candidate, c'mon in. I'll give you some values'?"

Clinton, hampered by no such reticence, had still to find some content for his soulcraft. How to do so was far from obvious. Previous presidents had mounted the bully pulpit to ask great sacrifices of their fellow citizens—to risk their lives in war, or to share their bounty with the less fortunate, or to forgo material consumption for the sake of civic virtue. And true to liberal worries, the most ambitious episodes of soulcraft often involved a measure of coercion, as in nineteenth-century efforts to Americanize immigrants and Progressive era attempts to combat poverty through settlement houses and other means of moral uplift.

But what kind of soulcraft is suited to a nation hungry for community but unwilling to abide restraint, yearning for moral purpose but in no mood for sacrifice? By design or intuition, Clinton has discovered a solution: don't impose moral restraints on adults; impose them on children. What V-chips, curfews, school uniforms and campaigns against truancy, teenage pregnancy and underage smoking have in common is that they all address people's anxieties about the erosion of moral authority by attending to the moral character of their children. Clinton's politics of virtue avoids the objection of paternalism by becoming, strictly speaking, paternal.

Some may complain that, compared to historic projects of moral and civic improvement, Clinton's sermonizing amounts to soulcraft lite, an exercise in easy virtue that does little to challenge the civic habits and dispositions of grown-ups. But perhaps that is all we can expect these days. Clinton's politics of virtue is at least an improvement over flag factories and Willie Horton. And it just might help make him become the first Democratic president since FDR to win reelection.

MICHAEL J. SANDEL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Midsummer Roundup

Celestial Clockwork (October). If you crossed *Diva* with *Le Million*, the result would land you somewhere in this neighborhood. Beineix's 1981 high-style cinematographic escapade and Clair's masterly farce of 1931 are both set in Paris, and both have a good deal to do with music, especially opera. This new film by Fina Torres has the *Vanity Fair* sheen of the former, the ingenious fun of the latter, and is soaked in music, especially opera. It's about youth, sex, singing and (therefore?) Paris.

Torres, who wrote the screenplay with a squad of assistants, tells us of Ana, a young Venezuelan woman who flees the altar in Caracas in her wedding gown, boards a plane and soon is living with several other young women in crowded Left Bank quarters. Ana sings: one of the few things she has brought with her is a large poster of Callas. She finds and impresses an old teacher, that familiar but welcome figure who is holding up standards in a sleazy world; and, though he shakes his head, she seeks the leading role in a film that an Italian—but *Italian*—director is going to make of Rossini's *La Cenerentola*. One of Ana's roommates is also after the part; an attractive female psychoanalyst is after Ana. And also involved is an African witch doctor who practices in Paris. So there are plenty of twists, lots of silliness and suspense and *brio*.

Ricardo Aronovitch, the cinematographer who did Losey's *Providence* as one item in a long and lush career, splashes us with cascades of color and music-video abandon. Ana's singing voice is supplied by Elsa Maurus, with a bit of Callas. Ana herself is supplied by Ariadna Gil, who is completely winning. The title refers both to fireworks in the sky and astrology. Why not?

Rendezvous in Paris (Artificial Eye). This time the city is seen by the aesthetically subtle Eric Rohmer, less an excited discoverer of Paris than Fina Torres, more of an old, experienced lover.

In Rohmer's marvelous filmography are two series of six features each, *Six Moral Tales* and *Comedies and Proverbs*. He has also made a film that is in itself a short series, *Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle*. Patently he likes series, and his new film is itself a series of three stories. But this time the bucket seems to have gone to the well too often. The three episodes, all concerned with male-female adventures in Paris, do little more than remind us that Rohmer has done better along the same general lines. The first two of these stories build to coincidences that could of course happen ("coincidences do exist," says one character); but coincidences, when credible, don't do much more than convince us of that fact—they can happen. The third story is about a painter who spends an hour or so with a newlywed young woman, doesn't seduce her, but is refreshed in his painting. The episode is too circuitous for the small point it makes.

Rohmer, now 76, is still a master of unobtrusive virtuosity. Few other directors put matters before us with his tacit refinement, an approach that seems to come from some place other than film, from a composed view of the cosmos that uses film as a means of expression. But even an undemonstrative director needs something to demonstrate. We get little more from this film than that Rohmer has not forgotten the pangs and pleasures of romance and that he knows Paris in a way that most of us can only envy.

Flirt (Cinepix). Hal Hartley is one of the best American filmmakers now at work, a pungent, distilling writer and a director with a rewarding minimalist eye. In visual terms his new film shows that Hartley is as suave as ever in making mere detail yield up mysteries; but his screenplay is vacuous.

It isn't a screenplay, really. He tells more or less the same story in three different settings, New York, Berlin and Tokyo. The manifesto for such an enterprise is, predictably, that the trio will dramatize cultural differences; but we can suspect that the real reason was that Hartley was hard up for an idea to sustain a full-length film. Put otherwise, it's difficult to imagine that he set aside a vital full-length idea in order to make *Flirt*.

His thrice-told story is scarcely interesting enough for one telling. In each case two lovers are threatened with separation, another person intervenes, and the result is that someone gets shot in the face. Hartley arouses some small curiosity with the first episode, simply to see how he has worked out the repetitions. (And in Berlin some different vibrations. There the two lovers are gay.) But little comes of it all except hope—hope that Hartley's last feature, with Isabelle Huppert, the vapid *Amateur*, and this latest don't augur ill for this gifted man's future.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Cold Comfort Farm. *Wry English humor, 1932. A hoity-toity London miss set down among woolly rustics, to the eventual pleasure of all. (Reviewed 5/27/96)* **Courage Under Fire.** *About our latest war, in the Persian Gulf, but couched in venerable military ethos. Two investigations of conduct and misconduct, smoothly handled. (7/29/96)* **Manny & Lo.** *Lisa Krueger's first feature, about two sisters, 11 and 17, living on the road, finds the kind of freedom that the sisters are looking for. (8/12/96)* **Walking and Talking.** *Nicole Holofcener's first feature, about young women in New York, takes us through some familiar walking and talking but does it with spirit and with lots of fine-detail realistic acting. (8/12/96)*—**SK**

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How NEWT and his friends plan to change your life!

Newt Gingrich is setting the agenda in Washington.

Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition has an even broader plan to change daily life in America.

Together they plan a revolution.

Just one item in their revolution (Newt's word) is to win election to School Boards across the country and stop the teaching of "un-Christian" ideas. Such as evolution, tolerance toward homosexuality, secular humanism and "devil worship"—that's how Robertson describes progressive ideas!

Mother Jones magazine has been watching these guys for more than a decade.

In 1984 we interviewed newly-elected Congressman Newt Gingrich and reported his spooky ideas — as well as the details of his own lifestyle that belie his public policy positions. (His first wife is still chasing him for support.)

Our early work on Newt has been quoted by the likes of the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek* and the *New Yorker* since his elevation to House Speaker.

It's time to get back out in front of the news.

Gingrich, Robertson and friends are changing this country. You ought to keep up and, when the time is right, speak up.

Mother Jones will give you the best in visionary thinking, in-depth reports way ahead of the media pack, information you can use — and some laughs along the way.

FREE WITH YOUR PAID SUBSCRIPTION

Yep, you read it right. With your paid subscription we'll send you the Mother Jones files on Newt Gingrich, including the interviews from the 1980s in which he discusses how his adventures in sexual infidelity made him feel "like somebody who's in Alcoholics Anonymous."

SEND FOR A FREE ISSUE AND CATCH UP ON THE BIG PICTURE

❑ **OK!** I'm ready. Send me my free issue of Mother Jones. If I like it I'll pay just $12 for a full year (6 issues) — that's nearly 50% off newsstand price! If Mother Jones isn't for me I'll just cancel, owe nothing and keep my free issue.
BONUS! With my paid order, I'll receive a NEWT-PACK FREE.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

Mail to MOTHER JONES, P.O. Box 469024, Escondido, CA 92046-9024 or call 1-800-GET MOJO.
Allow 4-6 weeks for your first issue. Basic subscription rate is $18 for one year. Canada: Prepay CDN $18. Foreign: Prepay $22 in U.S. funds. 5DBM2

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Time to Kill (Warner Bros.). Here, after quite an absence, is the old-fashioned Hollywood liberal film once again. It selects a terrifying social situation, plumbs it fairly honestly, then ties it all up at the end with a pretty pink ribbon.

John Grisham's novel, adapted by Avika Goldsman, centers on the trial of a Mississippi black man, Carl Lee, for killing two white men who raped his 10-year-old daughter. Dozens saw Lee kill the men: the only question in the trial is whether he is innocent by reason of temporary insanity or guilty because he took the law into his own hands.

The plot, seemingly tight, is full of holes. For instance, would a law student sneak into someone's office to steal material, not only breaking the law but jeopardizing her entire future? And at the end, when all seems rosy, how long can that rosiness last in a town where the Klan has already burned down a house, assaulted people viciously and committed murder?

Much of the dialogue stings, however, and there is a non-soppy look at the NAACP's attempt to help out in the case. But the picture's real distinctions are its directing and its cast. Joel Schumacher, who did *The Client* and *Falling Down*, and is involved in the *Batman* factory, works well in small scale and large. The movements of two men within a jail cell are arcs of drama. The announcement of the jury's verdict to the huge crowd outside the courthouse is treated like the messenger addressing the chorus in a classic.

Schumacher has an at least equal gift with actors—casting and directing them. Samuel L. Jackson, the avenging father, is coming to stand with Morgan Freeman in quiet command and internal resource. Sandra Bullock has an unlikely role as a law student who volunteers to help the defense, but she is—once more—irresistible. Kevin Spacey, the prosecutor, creates a man quite different from the grubby ones he has frequently done. Patrick McGoohan, as the judge who has seen it all before, gives the role the flavor of a man who has seen a play often and can still manage to appreciate it somewhat. Donald Sutherland's role is comparable to Jack Warden's in *The Verdict*, the hero's old law teacher and friend, except that this man is disbarred and usually drunk. Sutherland obviously loves the part, and we share his enjoyment.

That young lawyer hero, as very few Americans can now not know, is Matthew McConaughey in his first major role. McConaughey is almost worth the drumbeating that has preceded him. His resemblance to Paul Newman has been much noted. It was presumably noted first by Schumacher; and I'd bet that Newman's performance in *The Verdict*—together with his work in such sweaty Southern numbers as *The Long Hot Summer* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Hud*—were also in Schumacher's mind. He has made the most, quite pleasantly, of McConaughey's good looks and lithe body; but more importantly, he has evoked a performance from his leading actor that is inflected, thoughtful, humanly based, strong. McConaughey's summation to the jury is an expected set piece, but Goldsman has written it well—it doesn't exactly exist in Grisham's novel—and the director has helped the actor to drive it home.

If he doesn't show the talent and skill that Newman showed at his age, at least McConaughey proves that in the right director's hands he can deliver. So it's more than courtesy to wish him good luck—for his sake and ours. •

Jed Perl on Art

Formal Africa

Carving is metamorphosis. Working in wood and stone, the great sculptors make intractable material pliable, they turn hardness into softness, they transform the vegetable and mineral kingdoms into animal kingdoms right before our eyes. At "Africa: The Art of a Continent," the immense survey that fills the uptown Guggenheim this summer, these changes take place, again and again. There is more extraordinary carving, especially wood carving, than museumgoers are used to seeing in one place at one time. Certainly in New York, a city where painting generally takes precedence over sculpture, this show induces an almost unique kind of exhilaration. You take it in with your eyes, but you somehow end up feeling that you're experiencing all those marvelously variegated surfaces with your fingertips.

While much of the work and virtually all of the wood carving dates from the past hundred years, the show does reach all the way back to prehistoric times. This encyclopedic exhibition, which originated at the Royal Academy in London (and has also been seen in Berlin), is the first attempt to survey the entire artistic production of the continent, from Ancient Egypt to twentieth-century South Africa. In addition to figurative work in wood, stone and metal, "The Art of a Continent" includes furniture, pottery, textiles, tools and other everyday objects. In all there are more than 500 items, and that's down some 300 from what was seen in London.

Unwinding around the ramp of the Guggenheim and filling most of the adjacent galleries, the show looks better in the space than anything since Margit Rowell's pathbreaking Constructivist show, "The Planar Dimension," back in 1979. The sleek Plexiglas cases and starkly curving white walls provide a suave yet neutral setting that allows this panoramic display to expand; the sculpture is a commanding presence. Like most of the pioneers of the modern movement, Frank Lloyd Wright had an abiding interest in non-Western art, so it's not surprising that the theatricality of his rotunda provides such a spectacular backdrop for this pageant of African art. Adegboyega Adefope and W. Rod Faulds, who are responsible for the Guggenheim installation, deserve special praise.

"Africa" is a spellbinder, but New York appears to be sidestepping the spell. It's very strange. In London last winter the show was a huge hit for the Royal Academy, an institution where you're more likely to see nineteenth-century English watercolors or paintings by Poussin. The London installation was as overcrowded and inelegant as the New York one is spare and refined, but apparently in Britain the warehouse approach only added to the show's revelatory impact. Visitors felt as if they were discovering things for themselves. That installation was especially apt in London, where the work is less familiar to the general museum-going public than in New York, yet Americans who saw "Africa" in London expected the show to strike like lightning here.

The American media ought to have taken one look at the catalog and seen that this was a blockbuster to be reckoned with. Three of the biggest names in black studies have contributed. Cornel West wrote the introduction. Henry Louis Gates Jr. offers an essay on European reactions to African art. And Kwame Anthony Appiah confronts the mysterious fact that "neither *Africa* nor *art*—the two animating principles of this exhibition—played a role *as ideas* in the creation of the objects in this spectacular show." Appiah knows the dangers of such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a crossover event: when objects created to fill practical or magical functions arrive in the museum, who can doubt that they are somehow changed? But Appiah also finds the change exciting. He's glad to see an Asante goldweight or an Oron ancestor figure transcend time and place.

These African American intellectuals must have hoped that the show would take the museum world by storm. And they surely knew that juxtaposing material from Ancient Egypt and Islamic North Africa with work from south of the Sahara suggests a provocative rethinking of the relationship between the African continent and the Mediterranean world. "Africa" might be having a somewhat different reception if it weren't at the Guggenheim, a museum which the media likes to dump on, and often with good reason. But now the Guggenheim has done itself proud and the response is by and large the same sputtering dismissal.

I can't help feeling that the generally chilly response to this dazzling, complicated show is just one more demonstration that all anybody any longer wants from our big museums is bland cultural respectability. The Winslow Homer retrospective, which opened at the National Gallery last winter and is currently at the Metropolitan, a few blocks south of the Guggenheim, is an overblown event, yet people are flocking to see what they regard as Homer's feel-good Americana, and they've been encouraged by the commentators in the newspapers and magazines and on TV. Homer was a great graphic artist in his *Harper's Weekly* illustrations, but he generally overreached when he went into full color; he's a better Andrew Wyeth for people who ought to know better. As a museum experience, certainly, he's a play-it-safe classic. And if that's what people want, it's no wonder that they're avoiding "Africa."

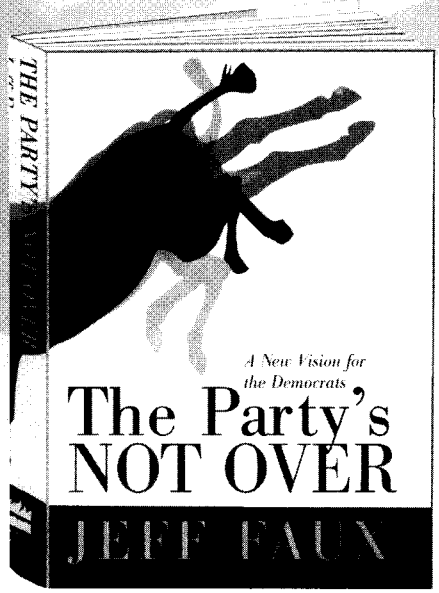
While the educated public is reluctant to criticize such p.c. extravaganzas as the 1993 Whitney Biennial or the Museum of Modern Art's current "Thinking Print: Books to Billboards, 1980-95," the truth is that when people head for the museums they want a break from the culture wars. They want familiar classics, and they don't care if they're not quite first-rate. They'll settle for Winslow Homer—or Jan Steen, whose able but generally underpowered scenes of the seventeenth-century Dutch at play, which are at the National Gallery this summer, have been discussed in some quarters as if Steen were in the same class as Vermeer. All that Vermeer and Steen and Homer have in common is how snugly they fit the museum context. They're reliable experiences, which doesn't mean much more than that they come in gold-leafed frames.

"Africa" may be overlooked because it comes without the frames. This show stirs up the museum, and that's not necessarily what people want on a weekend afternoon. It upsets expectations, perhaps especially for the likely core audience, which is politically correct and has a vested interest in believing that non-Western art and the Western museum are not an easy mix. In the catalog we are reminded more than once that many of the intentions of the men and women who created this work are alien to us. True enough. Bowls, spoons, headrests and goldweights inevitably lose much of their everyday, utilitarian feel when arranged in cases in a museum. And even experts in the field may be hard put to explain the complex magical significance of a particular type of mask, or the commemorative functions of figures which were often originally part of large quasi-architectural arrangements. Fertility figures were not designed to be contemplated behind Plexiglas.

But then what are we to make of the fact that so much of this sculpture takes to the museum environment with ease and authority? "Africa," which is unembarrassed in its Afrocentrism and

What Do The Democrats Stand For?

There is a crisis facing the Democratic party, a loss of vision and commitment to the party's fundamental principles. While liberals have splintered along social issues, "New Democrats" have embraced positions traditionally the province of Republicans. Now one of America's leading political thinkers offers a realistic blueprint for renewal, the basis for a new social contract for today's Democratic leaders.



"A vigorous manifesto."
—*Publishers Weekly*

"Provocative and compelling."
—David E. Bonior, Democratic Whip, U.S. House of Representatives

"The conservative revolution will be stopped dead in its tracks if liberals and Democrats have the wit to pay attention to Jeff Faux."
—Robert Kuttner, co-editor of *The American Prospect*

BasicBooks
A Division of HarperCollins*Publishers*
Also available from HarperCollins*CanadaLtd*
http://www.harpercollins.com

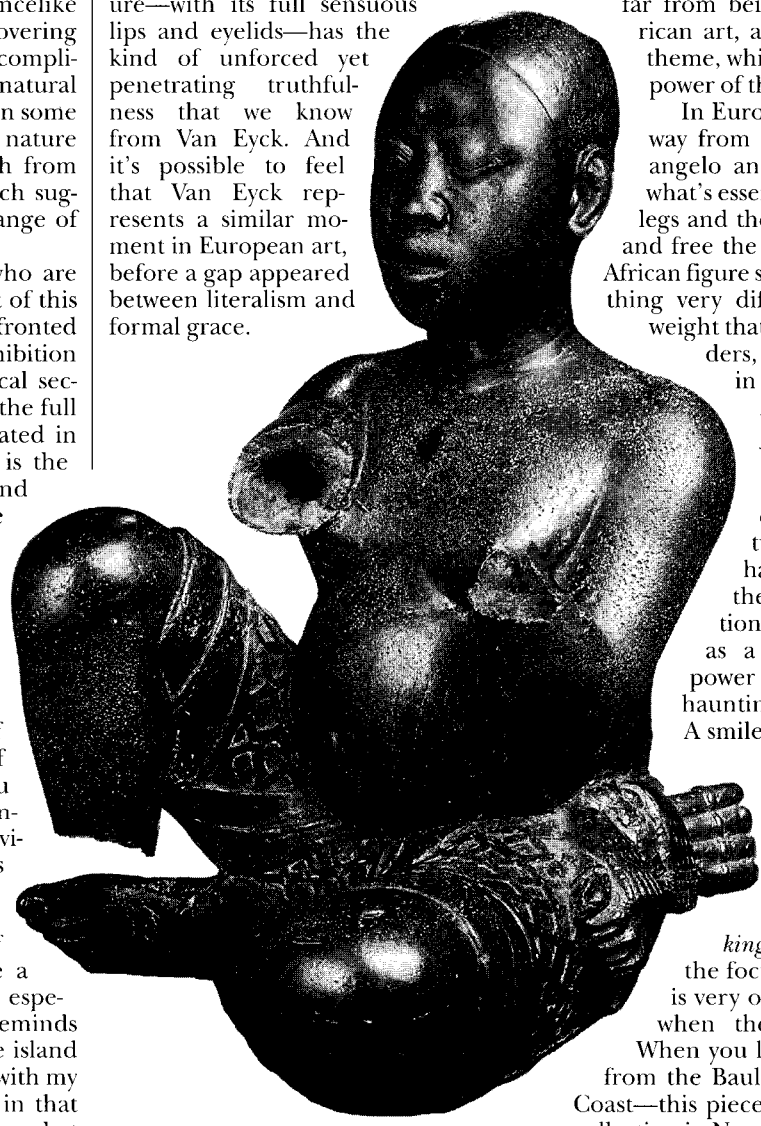
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unembarrassed in its appetite for quality, takes the-p.c.-twain-that-shall-not-meet and makes them meet. These works are not safe classics. The show suggests an uncompromisingly integrationist aesthetic, and that's not especially popular today.

Just about everybody who visits "Africa: The Art of a Continent" is going to feel as if they're in over their heads. That's part of the excitement. The shifts in size and scale and material can make you hyperattentive—can put you in a trancelike state. Every few yards you're discovering another kind of simplification or complication, another way of treating natural materials. The sculptors operate in some rare, privileged space between nature and culture. They draw strength from the very grain of the wood, which suggests emotional colorations, a range of moods.

I imagine that even people who are experts in one or another aspect of this huge subject are going to be confronted with unfamiliar material. The exhibition is divided into seven geographical sections, each of which ranges over the full historical spectrum of work created in that area. (The only exception is the section on "Ancient Egypt and Nubia.") If you really get into the show, you can't help but feel that you're trying to take in more information than you can reasonably be expected to absorb. The exhibition is a reach. Yet it's possible, if you go to the Guggenheim two or three times, to find yourself drawn to certain objects, and if you follow your intuitions you might just acquire the beginnings of an education. I kept gravitating to the section that focuses on "West Africa and the Guinea Coast." The 2,000-mile stretch from Guinea to Nigeria is one of those parts of the world where a feeling for sculptural form runs especially deep. (In this respect it reminds me of Burgundian France or the island of Java.) I started to play around with my reactions to some of the pieces in that part of the show. I wanted to see what sense I could make of them.

One of the kingpins of the exhibition comes from West Africa. It is a sculpture of a seated middle-aged man, cast in almost pure copper by smiths in the city of Ife, in the Yoruba community in what is now Nigeria, sometime in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. This riveting image of a self-assured yet in some respects unprepossessing personality suggests a moment in the development of an art form when naturalism is fully achieved yet the bloom of discovery is still on it. My impression is that little is understood about the evolution that led to this miraculous realism, except that the use of copper and brass in casting depended on the trans-Saharan trade routes (which were also instrumental in the spread of Islam in Africa). Yet the achievement of the Ife artists, which began to come to light early in this century but was not discussed in much depth until forty or fifty years ago, conclusively demonstrates that mimesis is very much a part of the African tradition. This seated Ife figure—with its full sensuous lips and eyelids—has the kind of unforced yet penetrating truthfulness that we know from Van Eyck. And it's possible to feel that Van Eyck represents a similar moment in European art, before a gap appeared between literalism and formal grace.



SEATED FIGURE, THIRTEENTH OR FOURTEENTH CENTURY, TADA, NIGERIA
The National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Lagos

This Ife masterpiece, which was until relatively recently worshiped as a fertility figure in a village on the River Niger, is a rare, miraculous survival. Unfortunately, the current state of archaeological and art-historical research does not help us understand much about where this naturalistic poetry led; we may never know for sure. Yet the realization that on the African continent abstraction might flow out of realism jibes with much that we have come to understand about European art, too. In the years during which Ife sculpture has gradually become known, art historians such as Wilhelm Worringer and H. P. L'Orange have been focusing on the growth of abstraction in Gothic Europe and the Late Roman Mediterranean. They've suggested that representation and decoration—or whatever one wants to call these two impulses—are dynamically related. And if one accepts that idea, then the seated male Ife figure, far from being an anomaly in African art, announces an essential theme, which is the extraordinary power of the torso.

In European sculpture, all the way from the Greeks to Michelangelo and Bernini and Rodin, what's essential is the ability of the legs and the thighs to defy gravity and free the figure from the earth. African figure sculpture is about something very different: it's about the weight that we carry on our shoulders, about our rootedness in the earth. In the great *Bafum king returning from victory*—it's also West African, from the Cameroons, possibly early nineteenth century—the upper torso has an awesome heft, and the broad, lean articulation of the shoulders serves as a springboard for the power of the neck and the haunting surprise of the head. A smile of feverish ecstasy animates every muscle of the king's face, as he shows off the severed head of a victim in his left hand.

Like the Ife sculpture, the *Bafum king* is a seated figure, but the focus in African sculpture is very often on the torso even when the figure is standing. When you look at a female figure from the Baule people on the Ivory Coast—this piece comes from a private collection in New York—it's not the powerfully bent legs that first catch your eye, but the great inverted U-shape created by the unbroken flow up one long, long arm, across the shoulders (which almost include the breasts) and then straight down the other arm. Since the hands rest on the knees, it's almost as if the lower legs have become an extension of the smooth, lithe, tightly sprung upper torso. This figure has a monumental, centrifugal force.

The imaginative genius of African figure sculpture depends on transformation of anatomical particulars into deco-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rative abstractions. When this process is most persuasive, it's because it has an underlying naturalistic logic. And as often as not, that logic begins and ends with the torso. The trunk of a tree is related to the trunk of a body, arms and legs are reimagined as branch-like extensions of that central form. The ravishing visual flow in the elongated Oron ancestor figures depends on this essential metaphorical conceit. Preserving at least an echo of the trunk's primary form from head to toe, the sculptors alternate bands of broadly curved and tightly angled shapes to articulate a torso which then breaks into two legs that are not so much independent entities as recollections of that great singular column. The rhythmic control of decorative variations in the Oron ancestor figures, while in no sense realistic, is nonetheless grounded in a feeling for the natural growth of forms. These artists can make big shapes sprout small shapes with the matter-of-factness of a hand's ending in five fingers or a twig's bearing leaves and flowers and fruit.

"Africa" includes a daunting range of material. There are dozens of tiny gold weights from the Ivory Coast, adding up to a universe in miniature in which every kind of form is present: abstract and figurative, geometric and expressionist. There are exuberantly simplified masks that are as tall as people, fetishes bristling with nails, finickily carved pieces of ivory, fantastical triumphs of the ironmonger's art. No area of the show is without its high points, though the sections dealing with "Ancient Egypt and Nubia" and "Northern Africa" are neither so extensive nor so compelling in New York as they were in London.

Southern Africa is particularly strong in nonfigurative works, at least so far as this show goes. One lidded vessel by a Northern Nguni artist is a spectacularly complicated bulbous form, with its own weirdly grotesque kind of beauty. Carved from a single piece of wood, articulated all over with deep striped incisions, this imposing composition, with a central vessel ringed around with pipelike tentacles, is an almost sci-fi-wild fantasy. A large collection of headrests, also from Southern Africa, comprises one of the show's great variations on a theme. In one example, the base, carved from a single piece of wood, becomes a congeries of intertwined, rootlike forms. There are numerous variants on the basic V- or X-shape of the headrest, some starkly simple, others dizzily adumbrated. Here the wood often has a smooth, aged patina, so that the objects seem to give off a dark yet lustrous glow.

ART SCENES *Galleries, Exhibits, and Events*

Private Art Dealers Association P.O. Box 872, Lenox Hill Station NYC, 10021, 212-741-7264. Not-for-profit membership organization comprised of over sixty Fine Art specialists. Appraisal Service for Charitable Donations and Probate Purposes. Membership directory available.

Hiroko Saeki, Inc. 45 East 89th Street, NYC 10128, 212-876-8804, fax 212-996-4363. *By appointment only.* Gateway to Japanese Market. Specializing in Masterworks from Barbizon, Impressionist, Modern and Contemporary Schools.

Center for Creative Photography The University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 520-621-7968. Monday thru Friday, 11-5; Sunday, 12-5. *Aaron Siskind and Max Yavno: Two Visions of Mexico and Selections from the Permanent Collection: Photo League.* On view thru September 15. Upcoming exhibition: *Crimes and Splendors: The Desert Cantos of Richard Misrach,* organized by The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. On view September 22 through December 1.

Jan Andersen—Contemporary Master Prints and Other Works on Paper NYC, 10024. *By appointment* 212-595-3648. Including works by Bourgeois, Celmins, Cumming, Diebenkorn, Dine, Hockney, Johns, LeWitt, Lichtenstein, Stella, Thiebaud and Wiley.

Robert Dance, Inc. 101 West 55th Street, NYC, 10019, 212-977-5612. *By appointment.* Old Master Paintings and Drawings; Drawings available by: Cavalier d'Arpino, Zuccaro, Piola, Solimena, Marchesi, Cibo, many others.

Anita Shapolsky Gallery 99 Spring Street, 2nd Floor, NYC 212-334-9755. Wednesday through Saturday, 11-6; Tuesday by appointment. From July 2nd to September 10, the Gallery will be open by appointment only. *Hot Art* will feature the work of nine artists continuing to work within the field of Abstract Expressionism. Artists to be included: Mark Gibian, Morfy Gikas, Michiko Itatani, Steve Karr, Eleaine Kurtz, Yeti Mitrani, William Scharf, Yvonne Thomas, and Allison Weld. Through September 28.

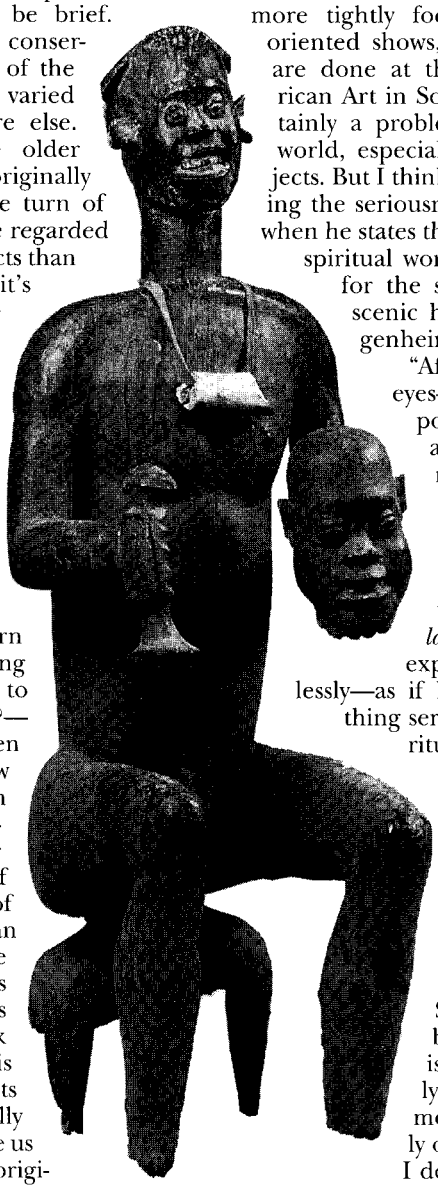
Swann Galleries 104 East 25th Street, NYC 212-254-4710. Monday through Friday, 10-6. AUCTIONS: September 12: *Art & Architecture Books.* September 19: *Americana, including items from the New York Historical Society.* September 26: *American Autographs from Private Collections including Signers of the Declaration of Independence. Presidents from Washington to John F. Kennedy, Revolutionary and Loyalist figures, both legendary and lesser-known.* Please write or call for preview hours, quarterly newsletter with full auction schedule, and to purchase catalogues.

Art Scenes is a regular advertising service of *The New Republic* featuring art news and announcements. For further information or space reservations, please **contact** Jennifer Barrett at 202-331-7494. **Mail** your listing to: *Art Scenes, The New Republic,* 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Or **fax** the listing to 202-223-0566.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The work in "Africa: The Art of a Continent" has been gathered from a vast array of public and private sources. Europe's oldest ethnographic collections are represented, as are newer museums in Africa. The American leg of the show includes strong work borrowed from American dealers and collectors. Much has happened to some of these objects since they left the hands of the artist. The lifespan of wood sculpture in a tropical climate can be brief. And attitudes about conservation and the place of the arts in society are as varied in Africa as anywhere else. When some of the older works in this show originally left Africa around the turn of the century, they were regarded more as cultural artifacts than as art. And although it's doubtful that anyone would any longer dispute their formal values, the question of how we can best make sense of this work remains a complicated one.

Many questions that museumgoing invariably raises—do we go to a museum to feel things or to learn things? what do feeling and learning have to do with one another?—are heightened when the material is new to us. Confronted with so much that's so unusual, a museumgoer is going to ask lots of questions, and one of the criticisms that can be lodged against the Guggenheim show is that although it's strong on art, it's weak on explanation. This exhibition, which counts on our reacting visually and viscerally, can leave us in the dark as to the original function of many of the objects that we're reacting to.



BAFUM KING RETURNING FROM VICTORY, C. EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY, CAMEROON
(The Walt Disney-Tishman African Arts Collection, Los Angeles)

It's exactly this question that seems to have dominated the rather scant press that the show has received during the first half of its run. Holland Cotter, in a review in *The New York Times*, complained that the show "makes little sense of what ... objects might mean." Cotter thinks that the show attempts too much and delivers too little. Nobody can doubt that an exhibition that focused only on, say, headrests would give us a lot of valuable information; of course we want to know that these headrests were used to protect men's elaborate headdresses, and that they often include abstracted female figures, and that many of them were buried with their owners. Cotter does not dispute the formidable quality of much of the work in "Africa," but he worries that this high-profile anthology may distract attention and funding from more tightly focused, information-oriented shows, such as some that are done at the Museum for African Art in SoHo. Funding is certainly a problem in the museum world, especially for unusual projects. But I think that Cotter is denying the seriousness of this overview when he states that "entire social and spiritual worlds are passed over for the sake of yet another scenic hike along the Guggenheim's ramps."

"Africa" appeals to our eyes—and why deny that power to non-Western art when we would not think of denying it to Matisse? On this point I am in agreement with Peter Schjeldahl, who wrote in *The Village Voice* that "labels explain ... uses, uselessly—as if learning that something served for an initiation ritual made it accessible. If my own initiation into the work is Romantic, that's because I can't imagine a more practicable way to do it justice." If Cotter means to suggest that what Schjeldahl calls "the bliss of being blitzed" is somehow essentially incompatible with a more ethnographically oriented experience, I do not agree. There's a danger of creating a false duality. The show that is at the Museum for African Art this summer, "Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History," which is the kind of circumscribed project that Cotter prefers, focuses on the Luba people of Zaire and how several types of objects have helped them to sustain a sense of historical continuity. It's a show in which the tilt is ethnographic—and yet we want to respond to the way the objects look, just as the beauty of the work in "Africa" presses us to ask all kinds of questions about use and context.

Formal values are symbolic values and vice versa. The African sculptor who worried about mastering his craft may not have been thinking all that differently from Brancusi. The anthropologist who initially asks why something was made will have to look at it very closely. And the collector of modern paintings who acquires some African masks will quite naturally want to know how they were used. When it comes to understanding art, compartmentalized thinking doesn't get you very far. Iconographers need eyes, and formalists need to know what they're seeing. Tom Phillips, who is an artist, spearheaded the Royal Academy's efforts, and he is certainly not indifferent to the archaeological or anthropological aspects of the subject. (Michael Kan, a curator at the Detroit Institute of Arts, was chair of the committee that adapted the show for New York.)

Unfortunately, the grievously underfunded Guggenheim has published nothing but a skimpy greatest-hits catalog on the occasion of this important show. There isn't even a complete list of the works. The much larger and more complete Royal Academy catalog—which is being distributed in this country by Prestel and is available at the Guggenheim—is quite a help, but even this 613-page tome lacks the overviews that one might have hoped for. The Royal Academy catalog is a somewhat confused affair, with too many authors given too little overall guidance, but at least its packed, helter-skelter approach conveys a general feeling for the field. It's clear that many of the contributors have qualms about this encyclopedic survey, if only because it suggests how much the public has to learn. Yet these scholars also see this as a chance to gain a wider audience for some very great art, to reflect on how much remains to be done.

Schjeldahl predicted that 1996 would be the summer in New York "when Africa ruled. And we argued about it, probably." I would have thought so, too. But the arguments have not begun. From the art press to the black press, the reaction has mostly been silence. One can make too much of the non-response. It may be owed to nothing more than inadequate PR. But at a time when the very mention of non-Western art inspires guilt in some quarters and self-righteousness in others, the organizers of "Africa: The Art of a Continent" may have committed the unpardonable sin of expecting us to enjoy the show. As you make your way around the Guggenheim's ramp you keep coming face to face with the feverish ambition and the visual daring that you find only in the greatest art. The names of the sculp-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tors are almost all unknown, but the impact of their work is perfectly plain. Could it be that all this formal audacity has embarrassed New York into silence? Could it be that people simply refuse to believe that the art of Africa is this good? •

Needles and Sins

BY JANE MENDELSOHN

Trainspotting by Irvine Welsh

(W.W. Norton, 340 pp., $13)

Trainspotting, Irvine Welsh's novel about heroin addicts in Edinburgh, arrives from Britain with much fanfare, due primarily to the simultaneous release of the movie based on the book. Critics have claimed that the film "glorifies" the use of heroin, and some have said this about the book. I haven't seen the movie, but the novel is not an encouragement to start shooting up. Welsh writes with a wit that's calculatedly outrageous, and his main character, Mark Renton, can be winningly sarcastic, especially when he's in need of a fix; but this does not make the book an advertisement for drugs. Nor is *Trainspotting* intended to be a documentary account of a user's life. A ragged tale of young junkies in their 20s living on the dole, fending off adulthood and trying to escape from a world of AIDS, death and national despair, the novel is a coming-of-age story set in a milieu so miserable that it is easy to understand the characters' desire for oblivion. But to say that *Trainspotting* glorifies heroin is like saying that the *Inferno* glorifies hell.

Sure, Renton says of shooting up: "Take yir best orgasm? multiply the feeling by twenty, and you're still fuckin miles off the pace." But of course he says that: he's a drug addict. He says it on page eleven of the book, when he still values sensation above all else. And the story of the book is the story of putting Renton's statement, which may well be accurate, in perspective. *Trainspotting* asks the question, This feels good, but is it worth it? It dares to answer that question without phony moralizing or easy glamor. Welsh is able to pull this off because he is at home with irony and comfortable with contradiction. His precisely disheveled style mixes sarcasm and feeling, honesty and escape, and it captures with impressive grace the desperation and the ecstasy of addiction.

Trainspotting consists of a loosely connected string of episodes in the lives of a group of friends—or as Renton puts it, "Nae friends in this game. Jist associates." The novel is written in heavy Scottish dialect and is narrated by Renton and his friends. Renton, or Rents, as he is usually called, is a dropout of Aberdeen University, where he "was forced to leave midway through the first year after blowing his grant money on drugs and prostitutes." Simon, Rent's best friend, affectionately known as Sick Boy, is addicted to women and sex: "They call um Sick Boy, no because he's eywis [always] sick wi junk withdrawal, but because he's just one sick cunt." Spud is the dumbest of the bunch: "Even in his Ma's womb, you would have to define Spud less as a foetus, more as a set of dormant drug and personality problems." Frank Begbie has the role of the group bully, the one they all love to hate, whose drugs of choice are alcohol and violence. He is indiscriminately cruel, and demands an exacting loyalty from his companions. Friendship with Begbie "is like junk, a habit," and it's this habit, as much as heroin, that Rent, our hero, must somehow kick.

The inner circle of hell in *Trainspotting* is Leith, a working-class area of housing projects on Edinburgh's old dockside. Far above this misery sits Edinburgh Castle, a symbol of everything Renton hates: civilization, posh people and, most important, Scotland:

> Ah don't hate the English. They're just wankers. We are colonised by wankers. We can't even pick a decent, vibrant healthy culture to be colonised by. No. We're ruled by effete arseholes. What does that make us? The lowest of the fuckin low, the scum of the earth. The most wretched, servile, miserable, pathetic trash that was ever shat intae creation. Ah don't hate the English. They just git oan wi the shite thuv goat [got]. Ah hate the Scots.

Renton hates the Scots for having been colonized, not the English for colonizing them. The depth of his self-loathing seems limitless and absurd, but it is real. He doesn't make any conscious connection between this suppressed rage and his own problems; he doesn't have time, he's too busy getting high or getting angry about more important things, such as people's taste in music or bad movies.

Still, Rent is our hero because he is smarter than his friends, and because, as Begbie puts it, "He's goat [got] style." (Begbie hates and admires his friend for this, and shortly after making the observation, Begbie fills Rent's beer can, while Rent is asleep, with piss.) Renton's sexy, aloof style is ironic. Always a step back from the situation, even, or especially, in the midst of a crisis, he is forever joking, punning, working the moment. After showing a friend how to shoot up, and then lecturing him to make it the first and last time, Rent explains to us: "Ah said that because ah wis sure the cunt wis gaunnae ask us fir some." And Welsh is usually right behind Rent, one more step back, revealing the irony of Rent's irony—the pathetic, if entertaining, hypocrisy of the junkie's so-called "brutal honesty."

One morning, Renton discovers that he's gone to bed with a 14-year-old girl, and finds himself eating breakfast with her parents:

> So what is it you do, Mark? the mother asked him.
>
> What he did, at least work-wise, was nothing. He was in a syndicate which operated a giro [government unemployment check] fraud system, and he claimed benefit at five different addresses, one each in Edinburgh, Livingston and Glasgow, two in London, at Shepherd's Bush and Hackney. Defrauding the Government in such a way always made Renton feel virtuous, and it was difficult to remain discreet about his achievements. He knew he had to though, as sanctimonious, self-righteous, nosey bastards were everywhere, just waiting to tip off the authorities. Renton felt that he deserved the money, as the management skills employed to maintain such a state of affairs were fairly extensive, especially for someone struggling to control a heroin habit.

Irony depends upon distance and perspective, and it can work two ways, like an optical illusion: Rent's distance from himself, his alienation, leads him to heroin, but his perspective, his capacity for detachment and self-awareness, is also his only way out. The careful manipulation of perspective is what makes Welsh's writing more than just a catalog of dead baby humor and drug lore. Through his use of vernacular and shifting voices, he stays close enough to his characters to get into their heads, but far enough away to show their self-delusion.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He is not afraid to make fun of his subjects, but he doesn't judge them: he lets them judge themselves. As a result, his ironic style is rarely shallow or just for laughs. It's appropriate, because conversation in hell is charged with irony. When the present is torture, and the future is more of the same, the idea of communication seems faintly ludicrous.

Renton and his motley crew don't really communicate. They share drugs, swap anecdotes, manipulate each other and fight, with each other and with innocent bystanders. They've all been friends since childhood, and although the bonds between them are strong, the relationships linger because they feel stuck with one another. They use the safe haven of friendship to keep the unhappiness, boredom and looming threat of adult responsibility at bay. The term "trainspotting" refers to the depressing British hobby of keeping obsessive notes on the arrival and departure of trains, and it is a metaphor for shooting heroin and the obsessional, hopeless nature of the addict's life.

In the opening scene of the book, Renton watches a video while Sick Boy sinks into withdrawal. Sick Boy wants Renton to help him get to their dealer's apartment. Renton doesn't want to stop the video, but in the perverse logic of the junkie's world, his lack of interest in helping his friend procure more drugs makes him feel like "a petty, trivial bastard." When Sick Boy pleads with him, "His eyes seem the size ay fitba's [footballs] n look hostile, yet pleadin at the same time: poignant testimonies to ma supposed betrayal." Rent knows he's being used, but he can't resist. His dilemma in this scene captures the central themes of the novel: addiction, friendship, betrayal, choice. Renton is easily exploited by Sick Boy's junkie logic because he is as addicted to his friendships as he is to smack. Whether he will have the strength to move on and become his own person, whether he will "betray" his friends and his heroin habit, becomes the single most important question in the book.

This question lends Welsh's episodic story an intermittent narrative drive, and places it in the tradition of the coming-of-age novel. Take away the needles and the accent, and Renton looks like Holden Caulfield, who also was considered offensive and decadent in his day. Although Renton is older and more self-aware, and in many ways Holden is more independent and mature, the two have much in common. They share a taste for degrading behavior, a contempt for phonies, and an inventive way with irony. And like Holden, Renton has a brother who died young and whose death has deeply, unconsciously affected him, and another brother who has disappointed him. (Holden's older brother has sold out to Hollywood; Renton's joins the army and gets killed.) Both heroes are basically smart, depressed, suicidal adolescents; and their journeys chart a course from denial to despair to something like hope. It would be misleading to compare *The Catcher in the Rye* and *Trainspotting* too closely—what would Holden make of the idea of shooting heroin into his penis?—but the similarities suggest the essentially traditional nature of Welsh's book.

The tone of *Trainspotting* is jerky, in-your-face, like its characters' behavior. The language is rich with dialect and different voices, and at times it is a challenge to follow. A glossary has been provided for American readers, and they will need it. In spite of its style and its subject matter, the book has a familiar, classical shape. With its cast of small timers, loose collection of stories, its tragically fine-tuned attention to detail, and its absorbing sense of place, it actually resembles *Dubliners*. In one chapter, a family gathering for a wake is interrupted when the corpse begins to sweat and twitch. As it turns out, someone has forgotten to unplug the electric blanket. The chapter reads like a parody of "The Dead" by Quentin Tarantino.

Welsh's language, full of both subtle and abrupt shifts in tone and voice, has a logic that is apparent amidst all the raving and shock tactics. Writing much of the time in a phonetically transcribed dialect, he uses the vernacular in the same complex way he uses irony: to give us access to the raw, inner dimension of his characters' world while also giving us, through the very difficulty and self-consciousness of his voice, a more detached perspective. The language in *Trainspotting* is alienating at first, exhilarating once you get the hang of it, and finally poetic in its complications.

One of the most complicated things about the book is that it isn't written in one voice but in many. Each character has his own syntax, vocabulary and rhythm. Spud punctuates his stories with the insecure tic, "like say." Sick Boy hears Sean Connery's voice in his head: "Yesh Shimon, I think you may have a shtrong point thair." Renton likes to finish off a thought by saying "end ay story." This isn't just dictation on Welsh's part; it's literary in the best sense, using language at every level to tell a story. In one rare moment of pure description, when Renton and his gang are tormenting a squirrel, Spud, upset by their behavior, describes the squirrel scampering away from its predators as simply: "magic wee silvery grey thing ... ken?" The spoken word looks strange on the page, but Welsh understands that this strangeness can be beautiful and carry meaning. When he makes jokes with words, they resonate. Many of his word-games involve drug references. Renton talks about his "beautiful heroine's tender caresses." The word "score" makes itself felt in different ways, as a drug term and a sports term. Soccer is a kind of addiction in Renton's world, though he seems to have graduated from it to smack, and the childhood and national obsession with the game plays a large role in conversation. Before shooting up, Renton and his friends sometimes say, "Let's do it for the fans." On another occasion, Renton speculates semi-sarcastically that his drug problem might be related to his local soccer team's poor performance during the 1980s.

It is Renton who does most of the verbal tripping. When he is arrested—for stealing books—he defends himself before the judge by quoting Kierkegaard and vowing to beat his disease. He knows he can keep a straight face because he's so used to humoring Begbie, and to lying in general. As he puts it, "Better deadpan than dead."

One of Welsh's favorite words is "habit." He uses its religious echo punningly: "We called Johnny 'Mother Superior' because ay the length ay time he'd hud his habit." Habit is an important word not only because of its religious connotation and its drug reference, but because it implies a lack of choice, or absence of the will to choose. Renton and his bunch despise all the choices that they think society wants them to make, and so they feel as if they have no choices at all:

> Choose us. Choose life. Choose mortgage payments; choose washing machines; choose cars; choose sitting on a couch watching mind-numbing and spirit crushing game shows, stuffing fuckin junk food intae yir mooth. Choose rotting away, pishing and shiteing yersel in a home, a total fuckin embarrassment tae the selfish, fucked-up brats ye've produced. Choose life.
>
> Well, ah choose not tae choose life. If the cunts cannae handle that, it's thair fuckin problem.

This is a terrific passage. It is a manifesto not for suicide, but for the sidelines—for the limbo of addiction, sarcasm, escape.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

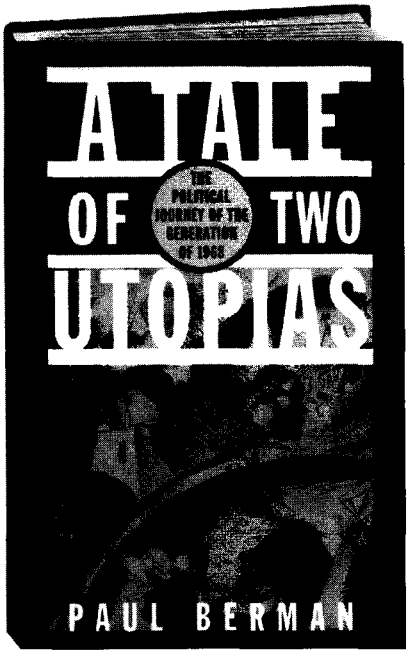
The darkly funny thing is, right after Renton says this he OD's, unintentionally it seems, and gets taken to his parents' home—his parents being people who have "chosen life." As he lies in bed, suffering from withdrawal, Renton is visited by horrible delusions, lectured by his ineffectual father and fed meat by his mother, who ignores his vegetarianism. Most ironic of all, it is here, in his parents' house, that Renton begins to change. Sick Boy comes to visit, and Renton allows himself to acknowledge for the first time that his friend is a manipulative hypocrite who never took responsibility for his own child, a baby who died from neglect in the early part of the book. When Sick Boy leaves, Renton realizes: "Something hud happened. Junk hud happened. Whether ah lived wi it, died wi it, or lived withoot it, ah knew that things could never be the same again. Ah huv tae get oot ay Leith, oot ay Scotland. For good."

Renton has this revelation a little more than halfway through the book, and it provides a turning point, sort of. We watch Renton's change with attention. He goes with his parents to their Saturday night club, where he dances with his mother to "Sweet Caroline": "Ah love the fuck ootay the bastards," he realizes grudgingly, "if the truth be telt." Reality begins to exert more pressure on Renton's life. He buries his brother Billy, who is killed three weeks before the end of his tour of duty. Renton has no tears for Billy, or illusions: "Billy was just a silly cunt, pure and simple. No a hero, no a martyr, just a daft cunt." But he does think his friend Davie, who has "caught HIV fae [from] this lassie," is brave to come to the burial.

Welsh is subtle. Rent does not change dramatically as a result of all this: he has sex with Sharon, his brother's widow, in the bathroom of his parents' house after the funeral. But he does leave Leith for London. He tries to stay off heroin. He holds down a regular job, and hangs out with yuppies who have pretensions to drug abuse. In one scene, he turns down a joint with deadpan mockery: "Call me a wanker if you will, but I've always been a wee bit nervous around drugs." He misses his girlfriend Kelly, who's gone back to Scotland to finish school. Kelly is perfect for him: waitressing to pay her tuition, she takes revenge on a group of sexist customers by pissing on their fish and blending her shit into their chocolate dessert.

For Renton, the pull of the old life is still strong, but its tragic consequences are becoming clearer. He comes up from London to attend the funeral of a

"EVERY PAGE SPARKLES WITH STYLISH, PERCEPTIVE, IMAGINATIVE INSIGHTS."
—*Philadelphia Inquirer*



"Paul Berman is a wonderfully lucid presenter and analyzer of recent intellectual history."
—Nathan Glazer,
New York Times Book Review

"Here is the sharpest analysis yet of S.D.S., of gay liberation, and of the larger spirit of rebellion that shook half the globe."
—Sean Wilentz,
Princeton University

"Paul Berman's writing has the same sinewy grace as Edmund Wilson's."
—Richard Rorty,
University of Virginia

Now at bookstores

NORTON *Independent publishers since 1923*

LAW AND THE COMPANY WE KEEP
AVIAM SOIFER

Whether we are black, gay, Republican, women, or deaf, our associations—whether voluntary or assigned—constitute crucial and inescapable elements of our identities. Both voluntary and involuntary groups have been important in American history but these groups have never been adequately addressed by law, which has as its primary focus the relationship between the individual and the state. The company we keep, says the constitutional law scholar Aviam Soifer, is presumed to be each person's own business, and generally beyond notice of the law. But as America becomes a more varied country and issues arising out of multiculturalism threaten to divide us, it becomes essential, Soifer argues, to recognize rights under the First Amendment that will protect the crucial roles of groups and communities within the larger national community.

Using history and literature to explore the complex issues of individual and group rights, *Law and the Company We Keep* is the first sustained account of the presence and importance of groups in our legal culture.
$39.95 cloth

"By rooting his analysis in the conflicts of case law—and by rendering such conflicts in clear, vivid prose—Soifer also offers plenty of instances of how the pluralist stuff of our social life gets translated into the individualist terms of debate that govern our legal system...There is much to admire in Soifer's work."
—IN THESE TIMES

Harvard University Press
800 448 2242
www.hup.harvard.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friend who has died of AIDS. He returns later to find that his old dealer, Johnny "Mother Superior," is an amputee. Having shot up into an artery in his leg, his limb is now "a bairn's arm wi an aypil oan the end ay it. [a baby's arm with an apple on the end of it]." It's while talking to Johnny that Renton reveals in one remark that he has changed. When Johnny asks him, "Ye still knobbin [fucking] Kelly?" Renton says, "Naw, she's back up here." Then he thinks, "Ah didnae like the wey he said that, n ah didnae like the wey ah responded." This is a new Renton—not exactly a clean-cut Thatcherite, but someone with a little compassion for the first time.

In the midst of Renton's gradual transformation, Welsh includes a chapter that stands as the most powerful episode in the book. Called "Bad Blood," it tells the story of Davie, the HIV-positive friend who attended Billy's funeral, and his revenge on Al, the brute who raped Davie's girlfriend and knowingly infected her (and by extension, Davie). A remarkable, funny, grotesquely satisfying story, told with the black humor and suspense of a Hitchcock movie, it takes all the rage and inventiveness that Renton and his band of outsiders have used against innocent victims and themselves, and puts it to good use. The rapist in the story is a disgusting excuse for a human being. Davie finds his secret weakness and exploits it to macabre effect. Unlike Begbie's violence, Spud's hapless adventures, Sick Boy's misogyny or Renton's suicidal addiction, Davie's rage is justified, and aimed in the right direction. Signaling the importance of this, Welsh transposes Renton's line comparing heroin to an orgasm from the beginning of the book. Just before exacting his perfect revenge, Davie says to the rapist: "Think of the worst possible thing I could do to make you pissed off, Al. Then multiply it by one thousand ... and you're not even fuckin close."

Renton also has an awakening that involves AIDS. It is not as moving as Davie's, because Renton has escaped infection himself, but it allows Renton to face questions of mortality and morality. It comes when he visits Tommy, the friend whom he turned on to heroin in the beginning of the book, in the days when he said things like "smack's the only honest drug" in between lies. Tommy has contracted AIDS, and Renton wonders about his own culpability: "Wis it me thit encouraged Tommy tae take that first shot, jist by having the gear thair? Possibly. Probably. How guilty did that make us? Guilty enough." So Renton takes a little responsibility, and he figures out something else: "Ah realise now that death is usually a process, rather than an event." This is a step out of the junkie mentality. He sees, at last, that things happen over time, not in one orgasmic, narcotic burst; and therefore that change is possible.

Welsh treats Renton's hard-won understanding with a light touch. *Trainspotting* is not the radical manual for the destruction of society that it sometimes pretends to be. But it isn't a moralizing tract prescribing sentimental answers, either. In the final chapter, Renton reunites with his partners-in-crime for one final, misguided drug deal. They pick up some heroin in Scotland and take it down to London for a big sale. Revealing how little they understand Renton, how far he has grown from them and how stupid they are, Begbie and the gang leave the bag of money with their old pal, while they go off to drink and shoot pool. It is not hard to imagine what happens next.

Renton's action at the end of the book mirrors his moral dilemma at the beginning, only this time he has a different take. It is a fraught choice, and Welsh does not try to gloss over the ambiguities. It is not only Welsh's insistence on examining his characters' motives and actions with ruthless honesty, but also his refusal to judge them, that makes *Trainspotting* such a strong, intelligent book. In the end, even the question of Renton's addiction is left up in the air: "Was he a junky? He couldn't really answer that question now. Only time could do that." At least Renton asks the question, and answers it with some self-knowledge. More important, he makes a choice. Even if he doesn't choose the straight road, he does, despite all indications to the contrary, choose life.

JANE MENDELSOHN is the author of *I Was Amelia Earhart* (Knopf).

Liberalism as a Vocation

BY RICHARD WOLIN

Max Weber: Politics and the Spirit of Tragedy by John Patrick Diggins

(Basic Books, 334 pp., $35)

I.

At one point in "Science as a Vocation," his great lecture of 1919 and one of the landmarks of modern social criticism, Max Weber pondered the existential limits of science and scholarship. With characteristic stoicism, he reflected on the fact that scientific work is tied, unlike art, to the course of progress. Whereas the achievement of a work of art can never be surpassed, "in science, each of us knows that what he has accomplished will be antiquated in ten, twenty, fifty years." It is the nature of scientific achievement that "it *asks* to be surpassed and outdated."

Weber's ruminations on the scholarly vocation may hold for the majority of practitioners, but they seem untrue about his own work. If one weighs the influence of the "classics" of modern sociological thought—Comte, Marx, Tönnies, Durkheim, Simmel—none of them speaks to us today with the poignancy and the pertinence of Weber. Over the years, to be sure, different aspects of his voluminous output (the collected works underway in Germany will number more than thirty volumes) have spoken to various constituencies. But in a time of many uncertainties, a time rattled by the imminent end of a dizzying century, in our time Weber seems to be very much the man of the historical hour. His prescient analyses of the afflictions of modern life—bureaucratization, rationalization and disenchantment—remain unsurpassed.

It is no surprise that recent interpretations of Weber have differed from the ones that predominated in the immediate postwar years. At that time Weber was largely viewed through the prism of Talcott Parsons's *The Structure of Social Action*, which appeared in 1937. For Parsons, Weber was a proponent of "action theory," a sociological approach that took the attitudes and the dispositions of the individual social actor as its point of departure. Parsons seized upon one of the aspects of Weber's work that was most congenial to indigenous American traditions: his methodological individualism, which stood in marked contrast to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

approach of other sociological thinkers. (It was nothing like Durkheim's stress on the primacy of the *conscience collective.*) Weber appeared as a proponent of individual autonomy, and his theories seemed to offer an excusably Germanic variant of rugged American individualism.

Parsons's reading foreshadowed the anti-democratic, cold war uses to which Weber's work would implicitly be put by American sociologists during the 1950s. Weber never made a secret of his mistrust of the masses, nor of his view that democracy, as it is grounded in concepts such as popular sovereignty and natural right, was essentially a "myth." He believed that democratic government could serve at best as a mechanism for selecting elites who were fit to rule. Such perspectives consorted well with the dominant approach to democratic theory of America in the 1950s. For one of the lessons of totalitarianism was that the masses are inherently irrational and unreliable; their participation in the democratic process, therefore, needed to be kept to a minimum, if an American corollary to the European disaster was to be avoided. In the lore of Eisenhower-era political thinkers and sociologists, popular input was viewed as a drag on the decision-making capacities of experts and technocrats, whose superior knowledge qualified them to govern in a quasi-sovereign, quasi-undemocratic manner.

MAX WEBER BY JACK COUGHLIN FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

What a difference a decade would make. The turbulent Oedipal dramas of the 1960s would play themselves out also in the interpretation of Weber's work. Suddenly Weber was transformed from a precursor of Parsonian "structural-functionalism" (with all its tendential conservatism) into the twentieth century's foremost cultural critic. The version of Weber that had been rescued by Parsons—the theorist of social scientific objectivity and "value-neutralism," the austere analyst of "basic sociological concepts"—was cast aside virtually overnight. The hero of "left Weberianism" was Weber the prophet of the "iron cage" of bureaucratic domination.

For Weber's new disciples, the Parsonian interpretation of his work was itself a part of the problem that Weber himself had diagnosed. In their eyes, the social science establishment had become a bastion of soulless expertise, a branch of the formalized "knowledge industry" of advanced industrial society. Under such circumstances, reflection on the ends of science had been banished as "unscientific" (or non-amenable to strictly formal analysis), and knowledge became a means—"instrumental reason"—at the beck and call of whatever immoral ends, of the forces that happened to be footing the bill. Was it not Weber himself, in the concluding paragraphs of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, who had offered an unsparing indictment of the modern ethos of untrammeled specialization? In what is probably the most cited passage of his oeuvre, Weber, extrapolating on the iron cage motif, decreed that

> No one knows who will live in this cage in the future, or whether at the end of this tremendous development entirely new prophets will arise, or there will be a rebirth of old ideas and ideals, or, if neither, mechanized petrification, embellished with a sort of convulsive self-importance. For of the last stage of this [modern capitalist] cultural development, it might truly be said: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."

Weber himself preferred scholarly sobriety, all its limitations notwithstanding, to revolutionary posturing and to what the *Wandervögel* of his day sought to put in science's place: an immediate and thoughtless longing for "experience." These inconvenient principles of the master were often overlooked by some of Weber's more enthusiastic interpreters in the 1960s. Still, in "Science as a Vocation," the work that summarized his views on so many essential questions, Weber emphatically stressed the discontinuity between scientific achievement and the ends of human happiness. In doing so, he undermined a shibboleth of the Enlightenment. As he pointedly observes: "I leave aside altogether the naïve optimism in which science—that is, the technique of mastering life which rests upon science—has been celebrated as the way to happiness. Who believes in this, aside from a few big children in university chairs or editorial offices?" Instead Weber concludes, echoing Nietzsche's view of the causal relation between rationalism and nihilism: "If these natural sciences lead to anything, they are apt to make the belief that there is such a thing as the 'meaning' of the universe die out at its very roots." In passages such as these, Weber's training as a neo-Kantian comes to the fore, as he seeks to demonstrate the limits of science as a worldview. Considered immanently, science is "meaningless," he concluded, insofar as it is incapable of answering Tolstoy's question, the one on which everything else depends: What should we do and how should we live?

Science can specify the formal and technical entailments of social or political enterprises, but the ethical or political sense of those enterprises cannot be adjudicated by science. For that latter purpose, a different faculty is needed:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moral judgment. And yet, according to Weber (and herein lies one of the major shortcomings of his thought), "moral reasoning" is a contradiction in terms. We can reason only about means, never about ends. Weber believed that ethical or normative questions are essentially impervious to rational evaluation. All beliefs, including moral convictions, are merely posited, extra-rational decisions, products of pure choice. There is a basis in Weber's thinking for the criticism that he was an ethical decisionist. And this renunciation of moral reasoning had weighty consequences for his understanding of democratic practice.

With his criticisms of the worldview of modern science, Weber identified one of the tragic paradoxes of modern life and explained the origins of contemporary nihilism. Since science is incapable of supplying us with meaning, meaning, in the modern world, has become a scarce resource. And traditional solutions—the redemptive power of the sacred as embodied in the great world religions—are forbidden to us, insofar as ours is an era that has already eaten from the tree of knowledge. Weber considers the problem of *Sinnverlust*—the decay or crisis of meaning—to be the modern dilemma par excellence.

The concomitant to the crisis of meaning, for Weber, is *Freiheitsverlust*: the decline of freedom. In Weber's view, spiritual powers have been progressively subsumed by the impersonal demands of an all-encompassing industrial-bureaucratic cosmos. As Weber observes in *The Protestant Ethic*:

> The Puritan wanted to work in a calling; we are forced to do so. For when asceticism was carried out of the monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which today determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism, not only those directly concerned with economic acquisition, with irresistible force. Perhaps it will so determine them until the last ton of fossilized coal is burned.

In the view of the Protestant reformers, "the care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the saint like 'a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment.' But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage."

But Weber's criticism of bureaucratic capitalism was different in a momentous way. It had nothing to do with Marxism. He had the courage to realize—and in this respect, too, he stood head and shoulders above many of his contemporaries—that the attempt to leap beyond the demands of modern rationalism by means of totalizing ideologies—Bolshevism, most notably—would only compound the problem. Such ideologies embraced a perilous "ethic of conviction," for which the ends of action were all that mattered, and consequences be damned. According to such reasoning, if it costs so many millions of lives to realize a utopia, so be it; the ends justify the means. Weber recommended, instead, a sober and mature "ethic of responsibility," which demands that the consequences of one's actions on each occasion be prudently weighed, regardless of the sublimity of the ends involved.

II.

Max Weber was born in 1864 into an upper-middle-class Protestant milieu. His father was a jurist and a successful politician in Berlin, and he seems to have been the very embodiment of inflexible patriarchal authority: autocratic, brusque, unconcerned with family intimacy or higher spiritual concerns. In sum, he displayed all of the stereotypical personality traits of a paterfamilias in the world of Bismarck. Weber's mother, by contrast, was by all accounts a woman of profound piety and humanity. Her son maintained an intimate and learned correspondence with her that ended with her death in 1919. (Weber himself died a year later.) The authoritarian disposition of the father proved painful for all concerned. Helene Weber had to endure her husband's insensitivity and aloofness. That she had lost two daughters in infancy seemed to leave him virtually unmoved.

The young Max was torn between a sympathy for his mother's predicament and an identification with the paternal superego. The Weber family romance came to a climax in 1897. A rising academic star, Max had received a full appointment at the University of Heidelberg. At last he would be capable of standing on his own two feet. Weber's father insisted on accompanying Helene, despite her strong protestations, on a visit to their son in Heidelberg. As Marianne Weber (Max's wife) describes the elder Weber's attitude at the time: he "is unable to overcome the idea that his now aging wife 'belongs' to him, that his interests and desires take precedence over hers and all others, and that he has the right to determine the time and duration of her vacation." It was at this moment that the 36-year-old Max chose to intercede boldly on his mother's behalf, thereby defying the paternal despotism that his family had endured for so long. He dug in his heels and brazenly turned his father away at the door. The bitter Heidelberg parting would be the last time father and son would see each other. Seven weeks later, while traveling in Riga, Weber's father died suddenly of an internal hemorrhage.

The unexpected death of his father precipitated a psychological crisis from which Weber would not fully recover for years. The guilt he felt at his father's death was overwhelming. The young sociologist was soon afflicted with a variety of psychosomatic symptoms: exhaustion, sleeplessness, inability to concentrate, shortness of temper, a phobic sensitivity to noise. For hours and hours he would occupy himself by mindlessly attending to his cuticles, claiming that such activity made him feel better. Doctors were at a loss when it came to diagnosing his condition, and Weber was forced to take an extended leave from his university duties. He would not resume them in full for nearly two decades—this time at the University of Munich, where he witnessed the dramatic events surrounding the Bavarian revolution of 1919.

It took four and a half years for Weber to take up some light reading and to write his first book review. All told, it would take six and a half years, until 1904, for him to resume his robust regimen of work. That summer he would depart for his first and only trip to the United States. At the invitation of a former Freiburg colleague, he delivered an address to the "Universal Congress of Arts and Sciences" in St. Louis, which coincided with the Universal Exposition. Weber spoke on social structure in Germany. It was the first public lecture he had given in seven years.

III.

In recent decades many fine books on Weber's work have been published. The threshold for contributions to the study of Weber is high. In his new book, John Patrick Diggins, one of America's foremost intellectual historians, offers a lucid and inspired intellectual portrait of Weber. One can only admire the fluency with which Diggins moves between American and European idioms. And although the interpretive tack of Diggins's study might not be entirely new—again it is Weber the tragedian, the theorist of the contradictions of modern life, who occupies center stage—his attempt to reevaluate Weber's importance in the light of American circumstances

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is extremely interesting, and merits careful scrutiny.

Diggins perceives profound affinities between Weber's tragic sensibility, his acute sense of human frailty, and the gloomy ethos of American Calvinism. According to Diggins, Weber's "tragic disposition" was hardly peculiar to Germany alone: "Consider the American figures Herman Melville and Abraham Lincoln. The novelist depicted a universe dark with ambiguity, and the president was accused of acting as a dictator during the Civil War. When it comes to the problems of knowledge and the problems of politics, both came close to standing for a Weberian sensibility." Weber, says Diggins, was the "Herman Melville of social science": "As in Melville, Weber's universe is a metaphysical nightmare, with society a myriad of vaguely seen systems and structures that require interpretive meaning, and human behavior a mélange of motives that require rational understanding."

In Diggins's view, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, whose second part Weber completed after his brief stay in the United States, is one of the definitive assessments of the American character. What Weber admired about the ethos of the Protestant sects, and what Diggins admires about them, was their notion of work as a calling. In stark contrast to the "mechanized petrification" that defines work in an age in which colossal governmental and corporate bureaucracies predominate, the early Puritans endowed work with a profound spiritual dignity. For them, there was something much greater at stake than the bottom line or the cash nexus. It was nothing less than the salvation of souls. Of course, as Weber informs us, and as few would deny in our era of media-intoxicated consumer hedonism, the original bond between work and spiritual concerns has been rudely severed. To reiterate Weber's metaphor: the cloak of worldly goods has turned into an iron cage. Economic activity that was originally viewed as an index of sublime ends—the ends of salvation—has become an end in itself.

The enigma that Weber attempted to decipher in *The Protestant Ethic* might be stated as follows: How can one explain the elective affinity between a religious ethos and a mode of economic conduct, which together gave rise to the realities of modern capitalism? Weber's controversial thesis about the essential link between Protestantism and capitalism had a dual polemical purpose. First, he intended his emphasis on the spiritual origins of capitalism to serve as a rejoinder to Marxist claims about the primacy of

You deserve a factual look at...

Jerusalem (2)

Should the U.S. Embassy be moved to the capital of Israel?

In a previous message we showed that before the Six-Day War in 1967, the claim that Jerusalem was a Moslem/Arab city had seldom been asserted and that it had come about only in modern times. The status of Jerusalem has now again become of interest, in connection with the ongoing peace process between Israel and the Palestinians and with the effort, supported by 93 senators, to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

What are the facts?

Jerusalem—reunited and indivisible. Before the Six-Day War in 1967 Jerusalem was divided, the Jordanians having occupied the eastern part of the city. During their 19-year reign, all Jewish residents were driven out, all Jewish places of worship closed or destroyed, and Jewish cemeteries desecrated. The various Christian denominations, with important churches and sacred places in Jerusalem, were hampered in their activities and operated under the strict control of Moslem authorities.

With the liberation of all of Jerusalem by the Israel Defense Forces after Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War and with the reunification of the city, Jerusalem truly became free and open. Just as the whole world rejoiced when the ugly wall dividing Berlin was torn down and the city reunited, so do we rejoice that the wall, the barbed wire and the machine gun emplacements have been torn down in Jerusalem.

"The question of the status of Jerusalem goes to the heart of the Arab-Israel conflict.To deny the status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel questions the legitimacy of the state."

U.S. Embassy not in Israel's Capital. While the Palestinians lay claim to the eastern part of Jerusalem, not even the Arabs themselves question that the western part of the city is Israeli. It is remarkable therefore that the United States has steadfastly insisted on placing and keeping its embassy in Tel Aviv, instead of in Jerusalem, Israel's capital and the seat of all government offices. It is as if a government accredited to the United States were to insist on keeping its embassy in, say, New York or Chicago, rather than in Washington, D.C.

With the U.S. in the lead, all other countries, with the sole exceptions of Costa Rica and El Salvador, have also located their embassies in Tel Aviv, rather than in Jerusalem. It is a bizarre situation; because no government business is conducted in Tel Aviv. The U. S. maintains diplomatic relations with over 150 countries. In all of them, the U.S. Embassy is located in the city that the particular government designates as its capital. The only exception is Israel where, so far, our government has insisted on locating its embassy in a city other than the capital.

Congress in favor of moving Embassy to Jerusalem. Despite the fact that, prior to their election, both President Clinton and Vice President Gore, assured the public that the U.S. Embassy would be moved to Israel's capital, the Administration has until now blocked all moves in that direction, declaring that it would jeopardize the so-called "final status" talks on Jerusalem.

Leaders of Congress—both Republicans and Democrats—have introduced legislation by which the U.S. Embassy would have to be moved to Jerusalem. That legislation has been endorsed by 93 senators. It is to be expected therefore that, before too long, reality will prevail and that the U.S. Embassy will indeed be located in Jerusalem—the capital of Israel, one of our closest allies.

The reason given for not moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem is that it might violate "Arab sensitivities". While there would be some posturing, none of the Arab states could afford to do much else. Egypt would not refuse its yearly multi-billion dollar subsidy from Washington. King Hussein of Jordan would not jeopardize the lifeline that the U.S. has extended to him. Even the PLO would soon return to the negotiating table. The question of the status of Jerusalem goes to the heart of the Arab-Israel conflict. To deny the status of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel questions the legitimacy of the state. The move of the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem will signal Yassir Arafat once and for all that he will not get U.S. and world support for the division of Jerusalem and for the establishment—in any part of it—as the capital of a new Arab state.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME

Facts and Logic about the Middle East

P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco,CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3)organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax-deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of

$ _____ NR/52

❑ My contribution is in the amount of $75 or more. Please send me your 1-hr. videotape dealing with three important aspects of Israel's strategic situation.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to FLAME P.O. Box 590359 San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

material factors in history. Second, he wished to refute Werner Sombart's attempt to single out Jewish responsibility for the rise of capitalism in *The Jews and Economic Life* (1911). In more general terms, Weber sought an answer to the question as to why capitalism had been successful in the modern West and nowhere else.

Weber's explanation of the elective affinity was that only the "inner worldly asceticism" characteristic of the Protestant ethic mandated the rational forbearance necessary for the rigorous demands of capital accumulation. The Puritan ethos, with its strict renunciation of worldly enjoyment and material wealth, proved especially conducive to the methodical conduct of life and self-control required for the development of rational capitalism. To enjoy the fruits of one's labor was sinful. To reinvest them in the enterprise was divine. Saving, not savoring. In the most immaterial sense, saving saved.

What were the specific religious elements that facilitated Protestant self-renunciation? Both the Calvinist doctrine of predestination and the Lutheran precept that faith rather than works represented the key to salvation tended to belittle the values of worldly success. Yet the Puritan sects came to believe, according to Weber, that whereas worldly success and the accumulation of wealth in no way guaranteed salvation, they might be interpreted as a sign of election: that is, as a sign that one had indeed been called or singled out by God for higher ends. This pious religious outlook remained deeply tinged by the Protestant saw that God helps those who help themselves. As Weber wrote:

> For, in conformity with the Old Testament and in analogy to the ethical valuation of good works, asceticism looked upon the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself as highly reprehensible; but the attainment of it as a fruit of labor in a calling was a sign of God's blessing. And even more important: the religious valuation of restless, continuous, systematic work in a worldly calling, as the highest means to asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion of that attitude toward life which we have here called the spirit of capitalism... With the consciousness of standing in the fullness of God's grace and being visibly blessed by Him, the bourgeois business man, as long as he remained within the bounds of formal correctness, as long as his moral conduct was spotless and the use to which he put his wealth was not objectionable, could follow his pecuniary interests as he would and feel that he was fulfilling a duty in doing so.

Diggins accepts Weber's interpretation in *The Protestant Ethic* in its entirety. Following Weber, he contends that the tragic lot of American cultural development is that it has become soulless and materialistic. (One of Diggins's previous books was called *The Lost Soul of American Politics*.) Ours is a society that lacks higher purposes and spiritual concerns. As Tocqueville, who also held American Puritan traditions in high regard, pointed out some seventy years prior to Weber, nothing is less conducive to spiritual pursuits than the possessive individualism rampant among democratic societies:

> Everyone is on the move, some in quest of power, others of gain. In the midst of this universal tumult, this incessant conflict of jarring interests, this endless chase for wealth, where is one to find the calm for the profound researches of the mind? ... In democratic centuries when almost everyone is engaged in active life, the darting speed of a quick, superficial mind is at a premium, while slow, deep thought is excessively undervalued ... For people in this frame of mind every new way of getting wealth more quickly, every machine which lessens work, every means of diminishing costs of production, every invention which makes pleasures easier or greater, seems the most magnificent accomplishment of the human mind.

Diggins's book opens with a long discussion of the parallels between Tocqueville's and Weber's diagnoses of American society. "Tocqueville emphasized democracy, individualism, and equality of conditions; Weber bureaucracy, institutions, hierarchy of status and power. One could say that Tocqueville told us what America was and Weber what America became." But Tocqueville, it must be said, was more sensitive to the complexities of American life than Weber, a fact which raises suspicions about Diggins's wholehearted embrace of the Weberian standpoint.

Tocqueville was an arch-critic of the perils of democratic conformity and the tyranny of the majority, but he also perceived countervailing aspects of the American social character: above all, the voluntary associations that serve as a *via media* between the inaccessibility of government and the solitude of private life. Weber's perceptions of American society, by contrast, tended to be much more one-dimensional. He viewed the skyscrapers of New York as little more than "fortresses of capital." Most of his observations about American politics pertain to the bureaucratization of the party system. He was fascinated and repelled by the party bosses, who lived "off" politics rather than "for" politics. He was also offended by the spoils system and the corruptions of political patronage, which detracted from the sublimity of politics as a "vocation" or a "calling." Such tendencies were prevalent in the America that Weber visited, but they were hardly as monolithic as Weber's jaded eye made them out to be. It was as though he had crossed the Atlantic with categories in hand and tried to tailor all he saw and heard to them. Tocqueville spent nearly a year examining American habitudes and mores. Weber thought he grasped America in a few months.

Weber's *Amerikanische Reise* came on the heels of the populist explosion of the 1890s. To be sure, the People's Party had already collapsed in 1896. Still, the populist movement found other outlets: working-class movements, the anti-monopoly and greenback movements, as well as the Knights of Labor. And nowhere does the grass-roots power of American democratic life—neither the Jacksonian heritage nor the associational virtues praised by Tocqueville—play a role in Weber's discussion. It was as though his capacity for analytical subtlety was dulled by his own metaphor of the iron cage. In this respect, perhaps, Weber had imbibed too much of the German ideology, with its apocalyptic images of America as modern mass soci-

Put The Candidates On Tiny Wooden Pedestals.

(Then Smack 'Em Around.)

Which candidate will give you the best lie? Tee up our '96 election collection balls and keep score. Each ball features a color caricature of the candidate and his party mascot. Available in twosomes—two Billy Balls™ or two Bobby Balls™ plus tees in a collector's display tube. $9.95 plus $3.50 shipping and handling. Follow through today, supplies are limited.

Competitive Edge Productions

1-888-933-2255 toll-free

www.golfballsrus.com Made in the U.S.A. ©1996

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ety incarnate. According to this view, "Americanism" was tantamount to crass materialism and cultural philistinism.

But there was also a deeper problem. By temperament and by training, Weber was especially "unmusical" when it came to appreciating the democratic virtues. For this reason, the Americanization of Weber by Diggins is peculiar. Also peculiar is his uncritical embrace of the American Puritan tradition. The leitmotif of his book is a celebration of Weber as "the last Puritan." Such allegiances were already palpable in *The Lost Soul of American Politics*, in which Diggins attempted to restore the honor of American Calvinism in the face of its many secular and liberal detractors. He surveys the political traditions of the United States and identifies not so much with the party of hope—the line of Jefferson, Whitman and Dewey—as with the party of fear: "the Federalist authors with their warnings about sin and uncontrolled power, apprehensions that reach an apotheosis in Herman Melville and the dilemmas of authority and find modern expression in Reinhold Niebuhr and the ironies of history."

Diggins repeatedly stresses the fact that the Puritan conception of work as a calling endowed worldly activity with a sublimity and a dignity that it lost when Yankee capitalism gained the upper hand and labor became detached from its religious moorings. But the truth about Puritanism is more complicated. For Puritanism, the spiritually elevating role of work was a hardly an unambiguous affair. More central, of course, was the conception of labor as the "wages of sin," the price humanity must pay for its precipitate and inglorious fall from grace. Puritan joylessness, a product of its obsession with sin as well as its anxiety about salvation, appealed to Weber's own severe Calvinist background and temperament—Diggins's fleeting attempt to turn him into a *Genußmensch*, a sensualist, fails to convince—but those with a more modern and secular orientation have generally and properly viewed Puritanism as a source also of oppression, parochialism and intolerance.

For the reformers of the Progressive era, a definitive break with the atavisms and the superstitions of Puritanism would have been an occasion for national celebration. It was the Puritan sects, after all, that had banished Roger Williams from Massachusetts, executed Quakers on Boston Common, and engaged in witch-hunts that culminated in legendary auto-da-fés. According to H. L. Mencken, Puritanism was defined by the "haunting fear that somewhere, someone might be happy." Vernon L. Parrington's *Main Currents in American Thought* (1927) sometimes reads like a catalog of the "inhibitions of Puritan dogma," with special attention to Puritanism's antidemocratic proclivities. To his credit, Diggins himself cites Randolph Bourne's indictment of Puritan tartuffery: "To the modern young person who tries to live well there is no type so devastating and harassing as the Puritan." The Puritan, Bourne continues, may "stamp out his sex-desire, but his impulse to shatter ideas that he does not like will flourish wild and wanton. To the puritan the beauty of unselfishness lies in his being able to enforce it on others. He loves virtue not so much for its own sake as for its being an instrument of his terrorism." Yet nowhere in Diggins's long and learned work does one find an adequate refutation of, or response to, the impious gauntlets thrown down by Bourne and others.

IV.

The other peculiar and debatable strategy of Diggins's book is the attempt to assimilate Weber to the ends of Anglo-American liberalism. Other efforts along these lines have been undertaken from time to time and have come to naught. In postwar Germany a major effort was made to identify native thinkers and intellectual traditions that had remained immune from the totalitarian temptation and to enlist them for the ends of democratic reconstruction. Weber, who played a key role in the deliberations concerning the framing of the Weimar constitution, seemed a natural candidate for such a roll of honor.

At first, the representation of Weber as the forgotten hero of German liberalism seemed to be proceeding smoothly. Then, in 1959, Wolfgang Mommsen published his *Max Weber and German Politics*, a study as monumental as it was explosive. Its detonations are still being felt in German intellectual life. In sifting through Weber's letters, political texts and other occasional writings, Mommsen discovered a very different Weber than the one that was fashionable: the proponent of *Machtpolitik* (power politics), the partisan of German national geopolitical aims, the enthusiast of "leadership" (or *Führertum*). In the aftermath of Mommsen's thoroughgoing yet by no means unsympathetic work (a superb English translation by Michael Steinberg appeared in 1984), it became exceedingly difficult to appropriate Weber's standpoint seamlessly for liberal ends.

A whole new world of listening, with ...

DT-200 TV/AM/FM Stereo Personal Digital Radio by Sangean only $99*

***But read this ad for an even better deal!**

There is absolutely nothing like it. This outstanding personal receiver fits in your shirt pocket or clips to your belt. It's packed with features that give you crisp reception over the entire AM and FM bands and the audio portions of all VHF TV channels—2 to 13. Here are some of the other great features of this breakthrough personal digital radio.

- *PLL Synthesized Tuning*
- *Built-In Speaker*
- *High-Impact Case*
- *State-of-the-Art Design*
- *Automatic Scanning*
- *Automatic Shut-Off*
- *19 Memory Presets*
- *Headphones and Belt Clip*

**The DT-200 works on two AA-batteries (not included). It measures only 2½ x 4 inches and weighs less than five ounces. Fidelity is astonishing! Sangean is one of the two world leaders in the production of advanced radio equipment.*

We are one of the selected distributors in the United States of this advanced Sangean receiver and are therefore able to bring it to you at the excellent price of just $99. But we have an even better deal: ***Buy two for just $198, and we'll send you a third one, with our compliments—absolutely FREE!*** Get "shirtpocket" AM/FM reception as you never had before. Catch the audio portion of your favorite TV show, wherever you are; watch the late TV show without disturbing your partner; listen to the commentator when you watch the ball game or any sporting event—and much more. Yes, get a new world of listening pleasure with your *DT-200 Personal Radio by Sangean*. Order it today!

FOR FASTEST SERVICE, ORDER
TOLL FREE (800) 797-7367
24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week.

For Customer Service and wholesale/premium quantity orders, please call 415-543-6675.

Please give order **#1041C331.** We need daytime phone # for all orders. Add $4.95 standard shipping/insurance charge (plus sales tax for CA delivery). You have 30-day return and one-year warranty. We do not refund shipping charges.

since 1967
haverhills®
185 Berry St., San Francisco, CA 94107

✆ Order by toll-free phone: (800) 797-7367, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week ✆

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Mommsen's view, the problem was not that Weber's thought was illiberal. It was that his liberalism shared the weaknesses and the debilities of turn-of-the-century German liberalism—a political tendency that was often too easily diverted toward the ends of power politics and national self-assertion. Historically and philosophically, German liberalism had relatively little in common with its Anglo-American counterpart. Its predominant focus was not civil liberties, but national unification and autonomy. German liberals reasoned that, if the dilemmas associated with Germany's belated nationhood (its lack of national unity and its vestiges of feudalism) were solved, other aspects of the liberal program—adequate constitutional guarantees, efficacious parliamentary institutions, a full array of civil and political liberties—would fall into place.

The tide of German liberalism probably reached its high-water mark with the Frankfurt parliament of 1848. In the aftermath of Bismarck's *coup de main* of 1871, which resulted in German unification and the founding of the Second Empire, German liberals never fully recovered their momentum. Over the next two decades, their efforts at reform were constantly subverted by the Iron Chancellor's machinations and power plays. Indeed, the liberals themselves had been wholly coopted by an essentially authoritarian political regime.

Weber identified politically with the so-called National Liberals, who were led during the prewar years by Friedrich Naumann. When the controversy over the building of a new German fleet (the so-called Tirpitz plan) erupted in the 1890s, Naumann thought that he had experienced an epiphany: "It's as if I can hear Jesus speaking," he remarked approvingly to a friend. In 1914, with the onset of war, Naumann wrote the diabolically chauvinistic *Mitteleuropa*, which was little more than a blueprint for Germany's *Drang nach Osten*, or expansion to the East. The National Liberal historian Friedrich Meinecke would express the essence of the "liberal imperialist" worldview when he remarked, in 1912, that it is "precisely the idea of imperialism which today holds our party together from within, and which is bound to bring together not only our right and left wings, but all our compatriots in times of dire need."

Like Naumann and Meinecke, Weber might be classified as a "liberal imperialist," inasmuch as they believed that an expansionist foreign policy was the surest way to circumvent the growing challenge of the working-class movement at home. It is important also to note that Weber never sympathized with the Social Democrats who, following their legalization as a party in 1891, had been the Second Empire's only effective oppositional grouping, as well as the country's only staunchly anti-anti-Semitic entity in an era in which antipathy toward Jews was rampant. (Weber's own opposition to public anti-Semitism was unequivocal.)

Diggins would like to interpret Weber as an "aristocratic liberal" in the mould of Tocqueville and Mill—a thinker who feared the mediocrity and the leveling endemic to mass democracy, yet remained a stalwart defender of individual liberty in the face of such stultifying trends. Such an understanding of Weber's political leanings is not exactly fanciful, but it is exceedingly partial. In many respects, the facts it leaves out of account are more revealing than the facts it includes. On close inspection, Weber's vaunted liberalism begins to crumble. That is why Diggins ends up having to shield his readers from a number of disconcerting facts.

In many respects, Weber's theoretical conclusions led to his political undoing. Since he had characterized modern society in proto-Spenglerian terms, as dominated by the "rationalization" and "disenchantment" of all experience, he perceived no prospects for transcending democratically the iron cage of bureaucratic reason. When Weber thought about the modern world politically, he saw two fundamental evils: the prison-house of bureaucracy and the irrationality of mass movements such as socialism, which was itself destined for a similar bureaucratic fate. Consequently Weber became, in his later political writings, an advocate of plebiscitarian "leader-democracy." The ominous German term is *Führerdemokratie*. Only charismatic leaders had the capacity to give the age of bureaucracy an imaginative jolt and set it on a less deadening and more creative course. Weber never concealed his admiration for Nietzsche's notion of the will to power. In a Nietzschean spirit, he reasoned that only extraordinary individuals possessed the will necessary to transcend the inertia of mass democratic societies. The iron cage could be destroyed only by a hero.

For Weber, democracy possessed no intrinsic normative content. Popular sovereignty and theories of natural right were discredited platitudes of the Enlightenment. As Weber wrote to Robert Michels in 1908, "such concepts as 'will of the people' have long since ceased to exist for me; they are fictitious. All ideas aiming at abolishing the domination of men over men are 'utopian.'" If democracy was good for anything—it

Correspondence Course

Fatal letters fly across the country.
One is full of spite and drama,
spun out in a bitter fall evening
as the writer, A., weeps at the early dark.
Suddenly, another lands in her lap,
from long-lost B., asking for a sign.
It's shorter and quieter than hers,
but was sent the day of an earthquake.
Then, when he visits, her house burns down.
Brave C. releases one to D.,
confessing all and bracing for the pain,
unfurling like a pennant
at the downhill charge.
D. returns her gift, appending
a witty, horrible little page
that settles in her mailbox like a turd.
The hypochondriac E., obsessed, alone,
is chastened by a sudden letter from F.,
in the hospital, dying. She flies back
to sit at his side. He scribbles a note.
She goes around the corner,
bowing her head into the blizzard,
to bring him his heart's desire,
a grilled cheese sandwich.
She cradles it under her coat, leaving
the warm tang of sorrow on her breasts.
"Miss Barrett, I love your poems and I love you."
What a valiant, happy act, thinks G.,
as he writes to introduce himself to H.
"Please deliver," he adds imperiously
on the envelope. As his letter surrenders
to the gulf stream, spinning in the charged
field of feeling that shivers magnetically
around the earth, his elegant script
blazes like an article of faith:
he really means please, please answer.

MARTHA HOLLANDER

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was good for *some* things—it was as a preferred mechanism for selecting elites who were capable of ruling others. And since Weber believed that one's choice of values could never be rationally validated, the question of the particular direction in which the charismatic leader elected to take the body politic ultimately proved a matter of indifference. As long as he provided "authentic" direction and had the plebisicitary confidence of his constituency, his rule was deemed legitimate. Weber preferred ethical decisionism to political democracy.

From such a standpoint, the normative distinction between democratic and authoritarian systems of government became meaningless, another atavism of eighteenth-century moral reasoning. Weber operated with a functionalist concept of legitimacy—authority was valid if it was recognized as such by those affected—and considerations of "right" had no place in his account. An authoritarian system in which the leader possessed the confidence of the masses was superior to a democratic constitutional state in which such confidence was lacking. The slippery slope on which Weber's later political thought was treading would become painfully clear in the aftermath of the autocratic abuse of the Weimar presidential system, which Weber helped establish. As Mommsen has concluded:

> Weber's opinion that in "leadership democracies" authority rests only with the leaders and is, in fact, legitimized by their personal charisma although it is formally derived from the consent of the "governed," was open to political abuse. When he argued that it is the charismatic qualification of leaders which matters whereas the democratic institutions are a mere functional machinery in their hands, he overstated his own case and came dangerously close to the "Führerprinzip," the fascist leadership principle.

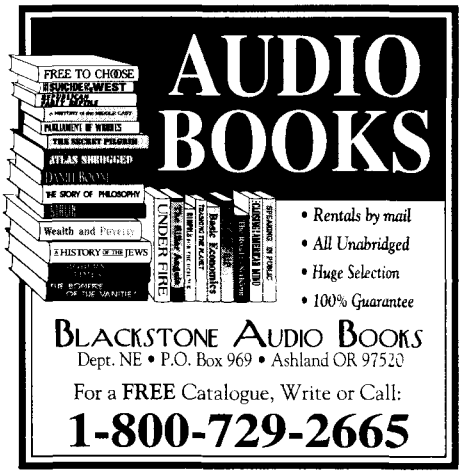
Perhaps none of Mommsen's claims ruffled the feathers of the German academic establishment as much as this one. Just when it seemed that Weber's liberal credentials had been duly certified, Mommsen subjected his countrymen to a rude awakening. He even went so far as to suggest that the controversial Weimar (and later Nazi) jurist and political philosopher Carl Schmitt had derived his glorification of the emergency situation, as well as his theory of political dictatorship, from Weberian premises. Certainly Weber's claim that democracy was devoid of substantive merit, that it possessed only formal validity as a mechanism for selecting elites, was easily appropriated for their own use by the Weimar Republic's burgeoning antidemocratic intelligentsia.

I want to be precise. Weber certainly would have been appalled by the political irresponsibility and the intellectual crudity and systematic brutality of the Nazis. Yet one would be hard-pressed to counter Mommsen's conclusion that "Weber's theory of charismatic leadership combined with the radical formalization of the meaning of democratic institutions helped, if only marginally, to make the German people receptive to support a leader, and to that extent to Adolf Hitler." This is what Diggins does not adequately comprehend. By attempting to assimilate Weber's political standpoint to Anglo-American conditions, Diggins tears him from the context, the German context, in which he must be understood, and ends up painting a portrait of Weber that is more lovely and less faithful.

And yet Weber remains relevant as an astute theorist of the crisis of modern liberalism. Although the solutions he proposed were flawed, it would be naïve to pretend that the dilemmas of modern politics that he diagnosed have ceased to exist. In many respects, the dreams of American liberalism have foundered on the reef of bureaucratic social engineering just as Weber predicted. In the aftermath of communism's collapse, liberalism should be enjoying a renaissance, but everywhere it seems to be in retreat. In America, liberals themselves must shoulder much of the blame for allowing their opponents to transform "liberalism" into the perfect political insult. American liberalism needs to open itself up to the ideals of the Jeffersonian "party of hope," to a vision of democratic promise that transcends the pettiness of party politics as well as a merely defensive orientation toward "rights," that construes rights or civil liberties to be the indispensable basis for democracy, but no substitute for robust democratic practice. For Weber, by contrast, democracy was a mere means, a network of formal procedures. He never saw that the liberal idea is a value-choice of substance. It is rather a relief to turn from Weber to Dewey, who knew that the best cure for an ailing democracy is more democracy.

RICHARD WOLIN teaches European intellectual history at Rice University and is the author of *Labyrinths: Explorations in the Critical History of Ideas* (University of Massachusetts Press).

We can provide you with addresses of pen pals from various countries to improve your linguistics. For application & prices, send your name, age and address to:
L'Agence de Correspondance Internationale
19, Rue Jean Jaures,
60550 Verneuil En Halatte, France
TEL: (33) 44 25 22 43 • FAX: (33) 44 24 80 54



WRITERS WANTED Debuting soon is ***the Americana,*** an on-line political journal now seeking contributors. Contact: DMf Publishing POB 8430, Austin, Tx. 78713 or email: dmfweb@concentric.net

EDITOR
ON THE ISSUES, a quarterly magazine of progressive feminist opinion, seeks bright, energetic part-time editor. Responsibilities include: issue planning, articles acquisition, editing and staff supervision. Ideal candidate will demonstrate literate, politically engaged writing and a background in magazine publishing that best fits OTI's mission of encouraging critical thinking, moral reasoning and activism for positive social change. Send resume, cover letter and relevant writing sample to: *On The Issues,* 97-77 Queens Blvd, Suite 1120, Forest Hills, NY 11374 or fax to: 718-997-1206

GOVERNMENT FORECLOSED HOMES FOR
pennies on $1. Delinquent Tax, Repo's, REO's. Your Area.
Call Toll Free: 1-800-898-9778
Ext. H-4377 for current listings

GOOD VIBRATIONS
Friendly, informative catalogs of sex toys, books & videos. $4, applied toward first order.
1210 Valencia #NR,
San Francisco, CA 94110

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WASHINGTON DIARIST

Company man

I HAVE LEFT THE NEW REPUBLIC several times in the past twenty years. Returning from a previous departure, I received a postcard from a TNR reader. "Dear Mr. Kinsley," it said. "I didn't know you had gone, but I'm sorry to see that you're back." Well, I'm not back this time. But in case you hadn't noticed I'd gone, I'm in Seattle, working for Microsoft, editing an online magazine called *Slate.* (Check us out on the Internet at *www.slate.com.*) This has involved dramatic changes for me: from east coast to west, from paper-and-ink to cyberspace. But the biggest change, in a way, is from working for a tiny, not especially businesslike, institution (that's TNR) to working for one of the giant powerhouses of American capitalism. I'm now a company man.

FOR THE MOST PART, IT'S SOOTHing: the corporate "campus," the company cafeteria, the company store (t-shirts and software), and so on. While other companies downsize, Microsoft can still afford to extend the warm embrace of corporate socialism. Perks galore: a great health plan; an athletic club (free) that, says a colleague, "is like the Taj Mahal" (but does the Taj Mahal have valet parking?); free bereavement counseling; free bus passes (of little use in this suburban location); refrigerators on every floor stocked with (free) soft drinks and juice. Free coffee, of course, although here in the land of Starbucks an energetic dispute broke out recently in the letters column of the *MicroNews*—the corporate house organ and now my second-favorite weekly paper publication (after TNR)—about the coffee's quality. The *MicroNews* is riveting, and I especially like the classifieds. A recent item: "RUN! My Parents are coming! Looking for a two-bedroom shelter for my parents and sister and her two snotty kids, July 16 through August 10 or 16." As I write, the dreaded visit has begun. I wonder how it's going.

NOT FOR NOTHING IS THE OFFICE complex called a campus. My own cubicle overlooks a small waterfall. On warm summer days (yes, there are some) employees—all distressingly young—lounge on the grass outside the cafeteria in the official corporate summer uniform of sandals, shorts and t-shirts. The winter uniform is a slightly nerdified version of the grunge look (jeans, plaid flannel and hiking boots—or retain the sandals, perhaps, but with socks). It's amusing to think that this youthful co-ed landscape is to the 1990s approximately what the image of middle-aged men in dark suits and white shirts getting in and out of elevators in the General Motors Building was to the 1950s. Remember *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit?* Today it would have to be called *The Person in the Plaid Flannel Shirt.*

THERE'S A WHOLE NEW LANGUAGE to learn, of course: a brew of computer lingo and business school jargon, seasoned with Pacific Northwest ingenuousness. Even elderly executives in their late 30s use the word "cool" without irony to signify approbation. In fact the generally low ratio of ironic to sincere observations is probably the most disorienting "communications disconnect" (local term) for a transplant from TNR's tangy corridors, where intelligence is measured in spirals of irony. Not so at Microsoft, where intelligence is prized even more but irony somewhat less. "Oh, I see. You really *do* think Mexican food is cool." "Yeah. Awesome."

MY FAVORITE BUSINESS TERM, SO far, is "dogfood." I think it comes from that old advertising industry joke about the agency that just couldn't seem to come up with a successful campaign for a dogfood company. Punchline: "The dogs just didn't like the dogfood," meaning, no amount of effort can sell a lousy product. At Microsoft they like to say, "We eat our own dogfood," meaning that software is used by employees before it's released to the public. Admirable enough, but I was stopped cold by a recent memo announcing with apparent pride that a certain project had "entered dogfood." Sounds like what happens to an old horse. But it actually means—well, you get it. Yet another piece of e-mail scolded that people seemed unaware that such-and-such a project was "in dogfood," and then instructed us on how to "access the dogfood servers." Servers are the central computers that run networks (or something like that—I'm bluffing wildly), so the dogfood server is—well, never mind. But the image did briefly make me reconsider my enthusiasm for the company cafeteria.

A TV EXECUTIVE DROPPED BY THE other day and was shocked at the size (small) of my office. Almost all the offices at Microsoft are smallish and relatively equal in size. It's another signature difference from the classic postwar corporate style. Billionaires have offices that many a mid-level insurance executive would find inadequate. Even Bill Gates's would not suit a mildly pretentious dentist. But my TV friend was embarrassed on my behalf. "You're talent!" he cried (referring to my former moonlighting job as a TV pundit, and omitting—I think—the ironic nuance with which the term "talent" is normally infused in his industry). I corrected him: "I used to be 'talent.' Now I'm 'content.'" Yes, in the software-cum-cyberspace industry, people like journalists are known as "content providers." The image this suggests, at least to me, is of a giant company that produces, say, plastic kitchen containers. One day it wakes up and says, "Holy cow. We've got to hire some people to make the lime Jello to put in the containers." Still, don't get me wrong: it's nice to be wanted under any label. Call me anything, just don't call me late for dogfood.

A COUPLE MONTHS after I got here, a new version of Microsoft's e-mail software, called "Exchange," entered dogfood—i.e., was "rolled out" for use within the company. Microsoft employees live and breathe e-mail, so this was a very big deal. At least in my building (Building 25), folks were quite upset. Wailing and lamentation echoed up and down the corridors: "I don't get it. Whose stupid idea was this? What was wrong with the old version? Why do we have to change?" Soon, of course, they were enjoying all the cool new gizmos and competing to show off their mastery. It all seemed quite familiar. My new colleagues were acting just like—well, like journalists. For once, I felt right at home.

THE MOST DISCONCERTING HALLmark of Pacific Northwest culture, to someone from the other Washington, is a certain—what to call it?—niceness. Microsoft has a justified reputation as a ruthless corporate competitor, and Microsoft people are generally just as ambitious and hard-charging as folks in "D.C." (as the other Washington is referred to). But they generally manage to combine this with some of the laid-back gentility for which the non-Microsoft Northwest is known. To an eastern transplant, the combination is troubling. They're all younger than me and smarter than me: that I can deal with. But they're all nicer than me, too: now that's hard to take.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

Finding a Way Point

[Today's guest columnist is actor/activist Richard Dreyfuss, whose most recent film is* Mr. Holland's Opus.** ***The column is condensed from a speech Mr. Dreyfuss delivered to the AFT national convention on August 4.]

Our kids, we truly believe, will have to make do with less.

Pilots, as they take off, focus their instruments on a point on the horizon called the "way point." You fly fine until you reach that point. Then, you must refocus, locate a new way point, and readjust your instruments to fly again with confidence.

We are at a turning point in America. Not just because we approach the end of a millennium and not just because, by prevailing in the Cold War, we have lost the security of an external enemy. Add to that 30 years of unceasingly negative events, from the Kennedy and King assassinations to the Vietnam War, from the oil embargo to Watergate, all of which have created an undying suspicion toward government and its institutions. The moorings we had in a certain set of values and beliefs seem to have broken loose; we seem, for the first time, to be without a way point.

But there is a new and dangerous deal here. If we lose faith in our institutions, it bodes particularly ill for us because we are tied to our country in a unique way—we are not the French or the Italians, held together by geography, ancestry, and common culture. We are tied by the abstracts of freedom and opportunity and the themes expressed in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Our foods, our gods, our marriage customs—everything is various, different. We are connected only by those yearnings that are intangible.

We are about hope. And faith in our future. The future, in fact, has been the one constant in the history of America. John Quincy Adams said of those who were thinking of taking the extraordinary step of emigration, "They must cast off their European skin, never to resume it. They must look toward their posterity rather than backwards to their ancestors." The essence of America is a commitment to an unbounded future of achievable dreams.

But now we have limited those hopes. Our kids, we truly believe, will have to make do with less. We have forgotten we are the richest nation on earth. We act as if we were poor and struggling; and those who have more than others are committed to hanging on to it. How else to explain the drumbeat of rejection for school budgets, health care for our people, safe bridges, enough parks? Our new mean-spiritedness denies the very heart and soul of our culture: We are about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; about opportunity, achievement, can-do generosity. For everyone. For each of us.

Yet the *real* and greatest enemy we face, as the millennium draws near, is the rejection of faith in the American ideas that bind us. We need a new way point, and we are going to have to look to ourselves to find it individually and collectively. I am convinced we can do this, but it will take passion and work, and teachers know that better than anyone.

Sure, parents want their kids to be able to go to college and get a good job. But that is not enough. They want teachers to help their kids understand who we are and how we should express our character in words and actions. I believe people also understand the importance of a *complete* education, from math, science, and history to art and music, though perhaps they are not clear on exactly why the arts are important.

It is not only so a student can learn the clarinet or another student can take an acting lesson. It is that for hundreds of years we have known that teaching the arts, along with history and math and biology, helps to create the well-rounded mind that western civilization and America have been grounded on. We need that well-rounded mind now. For it is from creativity and imagination that the solutions to our political and social problems will come.

We need to remind our kids—and ourselves—of the importance of where we come from. Of course we want them to learn to read and write, but we also have to seduce them into a love affair with the American idea. We have to paint a picture of republican democracy that is as romantic and irresistible as it really is. We have to teach our children our history, our mythology, our culture with passion, with wit, with rigor; and by doing that, we will create the possibility of that civic virtue that ties thinking individuals to their communities.

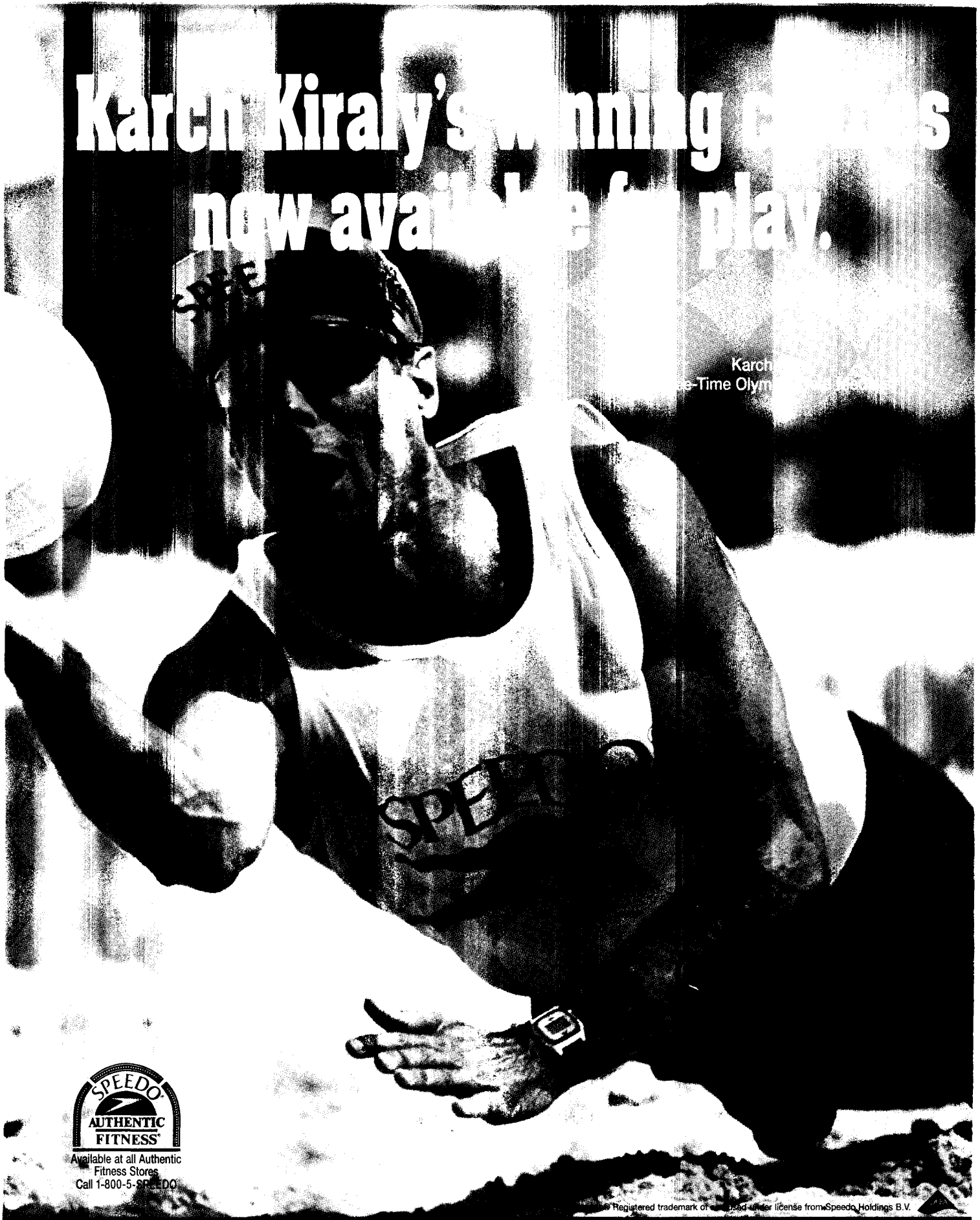
If we teach our kids these things, they will find their way point.

For copies of the full text, write Speech, c/o AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear in this ad under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address your letters to Mr. Shanker at the AFT, 555 New Jersey Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1996 by Albert Shanker.

ADVERTISEMENT

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED